



Senate OKs border deal; Trump will sign, declare emergency

By ALAN FRAM, CATHERINE LUCEY and ANDREW TAYLOR

WASHINGTON (AP) — Congress steamed toward lopsided approval of a border security compromise Thursday night that would avert a second painful government shutdown but ignite a major new confrontation — this time over President Donald Trump's plan to bypass lawmakers and declare a national emergency to siphon billions from other federal coffers for his wall on the Mexican boundary.

Wall money in the bill, about \$1.4 billion, is far below the \$5.7 billion Trump has insisted he must have. The White House said he'd sign the legislation but then act on his own to get the rest, a move sure to bring immediate efforts in court and elsewhere to block him.

The Senate passed the legislation by 83-16 Thursday with both parties solidly on board. House passage was assured late Thursday night, with Trump's signature coming on Friday.

Lawmakers exuded relief that the agreement had



In this Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019, file photo, President Donald Trump speaks during a cabinet meeting at the White House in Washington.

Associated Press

averted a fresh closure of federal agencies just three weeks after a record-setting 35-day partial shutdown that drew an unam-

biguous thumbs-down from the public. But in announcing that Trump would sign the accord, White House Press Secretary Sarah Sand-

ers also said he would take "other executive action, including a national emergency," prompting immediate condemnation from

Democrats and threats of legal action from states that might lose federal money.

Continued on Next Page



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In an unusual joint statement, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said such a declaration would be "a lawless act, a gross abuse of the power of the presidency and a desperate attempt to distract" from Trump's failure to force Mexico to pay for the wall, as he's repeatedly promised for years.

Pelosi and Schumer also said that "Congress will defend our constitutional authorities." They declined to say whether that meant lawsuits or votes on resolutions to prevent Trump from unilaterally shifting money to wall-building, with aides saying they would wait to see what he does.

Several Democratic state attorneys general said they would look at legal action to block Trump, and Puerto Rico Gov. Ricardo Rossello told the president on Twitter "we'll see you in court" if he goes through with the declaration.

Despite widespread opposition in Congress, including from some Republicans, Trump is under pressure to soothe his conservative

base and avoid looking like he's surrendered in his wall battle with Congress.

The bipartisan pact provides enough money to build just 55 miles of barricades in Texas' Rio Grande Valley — well short of the billions Trump has demanded to construct 200-plus miles as a down-payment for an even longer and larger wall.

The uproar over what Trump would do next cast an uncertain shadow over what had been a rare display of bipartisanship in Congress to address the grinding battle between the White House and lawmakers over border security.

The abrupt announcement of Trump's plans came late in an afternoon of rumblings that the volatile president — who'd strongly hinted he'd sign the agreement but never definitively — was shifting toward rejecting it. That would have infused fresh chaos into a fight both parties are desperate to leave behind, a thought that drove some lawmakers to seek heavenly help.

"Let's all pray that the president will have wisdom to sign the bill so the government doesn't shut down,"

Sen. Charles Grassley, R-Iowa, said after a chaplain opened Thursday's Senate session.

Moments before Sanders spoke at the White House, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell took to the Senate floor to announce Trump's decisions to sign the bill and declare an emergency.

Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, who is close to McConnell, told reporters that there were two hours of phone calls between McConnell and the White House before there were assurances that Trump would sign. In a surprising development, McConnell said he would support Trump's emergency declaration, a turnaround for the Kentucky Republican, who like many lawmakers had until now opposed such action.

With many of the Democrats' liberal base voters adamantly against supporting any of Trump's aggressive attempts to curb immigration, four declared presidential hopefuls opposed the bill in the Senate: Cory Booker of New Jersey, New York's Kirsten Gillibrand, Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts and Kamala Harris of California. Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota voted for it, as did Vermont Independent Bernie Sanders, who is expected to join the field soon.

White House aides and congressional Republicans have said that besides an emergency, Trump might assert other authorities that could conceivably put him within reach of billions of dollars. That money could come from funds targeted for military construction, disaster relief and counter-drug efforts.

Congressional aides say there is \$21 billion in military construction money that could potentially be used by Trump if he declares a



House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., joins supporters of President Donald Trump and family members of Americans killed by undocumented immigrants as they gather to promote their support for a border wall with Mexico, at the Capitol in Washington, Wednesday, Feb. 13, 2019.

Associated Press

national emergency. But according to the law the money has to be used in support of U.S. armed forces, they say.

The Defense Department has declined to provide any details on available money.

Democrats say there is no crisis at the border and Trump is merely sidestepping Congress. And some Republicans warn that future Democratic presidents could use his precedent to force spending on their own priorities such as gun control.

Notably, the word "wall," the heart of many a chant at Trump campaign events and his rallies as president, is absent from the compromise's 1,768-page legislative and descriptive language. "Barriers" and "fencing" are the nouns of choice, a victory for Democrats eager to deny Trump even a rhetorical victory.

The agreement, which took bargainers three weeks to strike, would also squeeze funding for Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE, in an attempt to pressure the agency to detain fewer immigrants. To the dismay of Democrats, however, it would still leave an agency many of them consider abusive holding thousands more immigrants than last year.

Provisions like that were prompting some of the most liberal Democrats to vote "no." Four progressive freshmen including Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez,

D-N.Y., said they were opposing the agreement to show "a rejection of the hateful policies, priorities, and rhetoric of the Trump Administration."

The measure contains money for improved surveillance equipment, more customs agents and humanitarian aid for detained immigrants. The overall bill also provides \$330 billion to finance dozens of federal programs for the rest of the year, one-fourth of federal agency budgets.

Trump sparked the last shutdown before Christmas after Democrats snubbed his demand for \$5.7 billion for the wall. The closure denied paychecks to 800,000 federal workers, hurt contractors and people reliant on government services and was loathed by the public. With polls showing the public blamed him and GOP lawmakers, Trump folded on Jan. 25 without getting any of the wall funds. His capitulation was a political fiasco for Republicans and handed Pelosi a victory less than a month after Democrats took over the House and confronted Trump with a formidable rival for power.

Trump has repeatedly vowed Mexico would pay for the wall, a suggestion that country has spurned. His descriptions of the wall's size have fluctuated, at times saying it would cover 1,000 miles of the 2,000-mile boundary. Previous administrations constructed over 650 miles of barriers. □

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William Barr sworn in for 2nd stint as U.S. attorney general

By MARY CLARE JALONICK
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — William Barr was sworn in Thursday for his second stint as the nation's attorney general, taking the helm of the Justice Department as special counsel Robert Mueller investigates Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election.

Earlier Thursday, the Senate voted 54-45 to confirm the veteran government official, mostly along party lines. Barr, who also served as attorney general from 1991 to 1993 during President George H.W. Bush's administration, succeeds Jeff Sessions. President Donald Trump pushed Sessions out of office last year after railing against his decision to recuse himself from the Russia investigation.

As the country's chief law enforcement officer, Barr will oversee the remaining work in Mueller's investigation into potential coordination between the Kremlin and the Trump campaign and decide how much Congress and the public know about its con-



In this Jan. 15, 2019 photo, Attorney General nominee William Barr testifies during a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing on Capitol Hill in Washington. In this Jan. 15, 2019 photo, Attorney General nominee William Barr testifies during a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing on Capitol Hill in Washington.

Associated Press

clusion. He'll also take over a department that Trump has publicly assailed, often questioning the integrity and loyalty of those who work there.

Democrats, who largely voted against Barr, said they were concerned

about his noncommittal stance on making Mueller's report public. Barr promised to be as transparent as possible but said he takes seriously the Justice Department regulations that dictate Mueller's report should be treated as confidential.

Barr's opponents also pointed to a memo he wrote to Justice officials before his nomination that criticized Mueller's investigation for the way it was presumably looking into whether Trump had obstructed justice. Barr wrote that Trump could not have obstructed justice by firing former FBI Director James Comey since it was an action the president was constitutionally entitled to take. That view has alarmed Democrats, especially since the obstruction inquiry has been central to Mueller's investigation.

"Mr. Barr's views about the power of the president are especially troubling in light of his refusal to commit to making the special counsel's findings and the report publicly available," said California Sen. Dianne Feinstein, the top Democrat on the Judiciary panel. Feinstein said the attorney general should be "objective" and "clearly committed to protecting the interest of the people, the country and the Constitution."

Barr will be tasked with restoring some stability after almost two years of open tension between Trump and Justice officials. Trump lashed out at Sessions repeatedly before he finally pushed him out in Novem-

ber, and he has also publicly criticized Mueller and his staff, calling the probe a "witch hunt" and suggesting they are out to get him for political reasons. The criticism extended to Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein, who appointed Mueller as special counsel. Rosenstein is expected to leave the department shortly after Barr takes office.


Trump has directed some of his strongest vitriol at department officials who were part of the decisions to start investigating his campaign's Russia ties in 2016 and to clear Democrat Hillary Clinton in an unrelated email probe that same year. Trump has repeatedly suggested that the agents and officials, many of whom have since left, were conspiring against him. In an interview aired Thursday, fired former FBI Deputy Director Andrew McCabe told CBS' "60 Minutes" that Justice Department officials discussed bringing the Cabinet together to consider using the Constitution's 25th Amendment to remove Trump from office after Comey's firing.

Trump responded to the McCabe interview with a tweet: "Disgraced FBI Acting Director Andrew McCabe pretends to be a 'poor little Angel' when in fact he was a big part of the Crooked Hillary Scandal & the Russia Hoax - a puppet for Leakin' James Comey. I.G. report on McCabe was devastating."

In his hearing last month, Barr vowed that he would not "be bullied," said Mueller's investigation is not a witch hunt and agreed that Sessions was right to recuse himself from the probe. Barr said he was a friend of Mueller's and repeatedly sought to assuage concerns that he might disturb or upend the investigation as it reaches its final stages. When Trump nominated Barr, he called him "a terrific man" and "one of the most respected jurists in the country."

"I think he will serve with great distinction," Trump said. □

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Cardinal expects 'significant progress' at sex abuse summit

**By JEFF KAROUB and NI-COLE WINFIELD
Associated Press**

DETROIT (AP) — The U.S. archbishop helping to organize next week's summit of the world's bishops at the Vatican on sexual abuse by clergy said Thursday he expects to make "significant progress" in responding to the scandal that's riven the church, and that lay Catholics will help to hold the hierarchy accountable.

Chicago Cardinal Blase Cupich told The Associated Press in a phone interview that the Feb. 21-24 prevention summit, convened by Pope Francis, is necessary for all global Catholic church leaders to understand they must act and be accountable to the victims for the abuse cases stretching back decades. He spoke of the urgency while acknowledging that victims and their advocates consider such a gathering long overdue.

"I think there is understandable frustration on that level," said Cupich, hand-picked by Francis to help organize the summit. "All I can say now is I believe we're going to make significant progress here. And we should also realize that we always have to keep learning — we can't get to a place that we think we have this nailed down. If we do that we're going to get it wrong."

"This meeting will be a significant moment, I think, to put us on a fresh trajectory — in a whole new direction," he added.

The summit comes at a crisis moment for the U.S. church, following a Pennsylvania grand jury report that found hundreds of

abusive priests in the state, and the scandal over ex-Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, accused of abusing minors and seminarians. In December, Cupich expressed regret for "our failures to address the scourge of clerical sexual abuse" in a statement responding to a report by the Illinois attorney general that said the church failed to disclose the names of at least 500 clergy accused of sexually abusing children.

Zach Hiner, executive director of the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests, or SNAP, said in an email to the AP that church officials have repeatedly shown "they are incapable of accurately determining the credibility of accusations, being transparent with the public, and understanding the pain that survivors go through." The organization previously said Cupich should be removed from his summit-planning role.

"We remain cautiously optimistic that there will be real change as a result of this meeting, but regardless of what Vatican officials do, we are placing our faith in attorneys general and prosecuting attorneys around the country instead," Hiner said.

U.S. bishops, who last month held a prayer retreat outside Chicago as a prelude to the summit, had planned to adopt accountability measures at their November meeting that would have created a code of conduct for bishops and established an independent lay-led commission to investigate allegations against them. The Vatican blocked the

vote on the grounds that the proposals were legally problematic and had only been given to the Vatican for review four days before the meeting began. The Vatican told the U.S. bishops to wait until after next week's meetings and work with the Holy See to develop proposals together.

Cupich then proposed instead a model using the metropolitan bishop — a senior bishop responsible for several dioceses — to handle allegations against bishops under his jurisdiction. In the interview, Cupich suggested the "metropolitan model" had gained favor at the Holy See, saying he expected the overall framework Francis would propose would use this existing church structure along with lay participation to ensure their expertise is included and transparency in the process.

"Whatever framework is going to be put together for us ... there has to be in the involvement of lay experts to make sure that there's full visibility by the people of God," he said. "And then it has to be done in a collegial manner" using the existing structure of what the church already has in place.

Cupich said victims also will be part of the summit, both in their presence and through video testimony. But he also was the lead signatory on a recent letter that urged attendees to meet with victims "to learn firsthand the suffering they have endured."

"My experience in 20 years of being a bishop — and I've met with scores of victims — is that it's those personal encounters that are



In this April 23, 2015 file photo, Chicago Archbishop Blase Cupich processes from Holy Name Cathedral following the funeral Mass of Cardinal Francis George in Chicago.

Associated Press

transformative, not in a group session," he said. Francis has sought to lower expectations for the summit, saying last month that the "problem of abuse will continue" because "it's a human problem." He said he wanted to sensitize church leaders around the globe to the pain of victims, instruct them how to investigate cases and develop general protocols for the entire hierarchy to use. Francis in September summoned the presidents of bishops' conferences for the summit after realizing that church leaders in some parts of the world still didn't "get it." In fact, more than 30 years after the scandal

first erupted in Ireland and Australia and 20 years after it hit the U.S., bishops in many parts of Europe, Latin America, Africa and Asia either deny the problem exists in their regions or downplay it.

Cupich, considered a moderate who was Francis' first major U.S. appointment, said it's inevitable that some will see the outcome of the summit as a referendum on Francis that correspondingly places a burden on the cardinal's shoulders.

The letter he signed also included a warning that a failure to deal with abuse now will jeopardize the church's mission globally.

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Parkland shooting victims are remembered in silence

By KELLI KENNEDY, ADRIANA GOMEZ LICON and TERRY SPENCER

Associated Press

PARKLAND, Fla. (AP) — Students at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High and other schools across the U.S. bowed their heads in a moment of silence and took part in volunteer projects Thursday to mark the anniversary of the shooting rampage that claimed 17 lives. But for many Parkland students, the tragedy was still so raw they couldn't bring themselves to set foot in the building.

Fewer than 300 of the 3,200 students at the high school showed up for what was only a half-day, with classes cut short so that the teenagers would not be there around 2:20 p.m., the traumatic moment last year when gunfire erupted. Senior Spencer Bloom skipped school to spend the day with students from the history class he was in during the shooting. He said he struggles with panic attacks and feared he might have one if he went in to school.



Suzanne Devine Clark, an art teacher at Deerfield Beach Elementary School, places painted stones at a memorial outside Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School during the one-year anniversary of the school shooting, Thursday, Feb. 14, 2019, in Parkland, Fla.

Associated Press

"There's all this emotion and it's all being concentrated back on one day," Bloom said.

The massacre on Feb. 14, 2018 — Valentine's Day — inflamed the nation's debate over guns, turned some Parkland students into political activists and gave rise to some of the biggest youth demonstra-

tions since the Vietnam era. Many Stoneman Douglas students arrived wearing the burgundy #MSDStrong T-shirts that have become an emblem of the tragedy. Outside, clear plastic figurines of angels were erected for each of the 14 students and three staff members killed.

A moment of silence was observed there and at other schools across Florida and beyond at 10:17 a.m., a time selected to denote the 17 slain.

Reporters were not allowed inside the school, but students packed lunches for poor children in Haiti as part of a number of volunteer projects undertaken to try to make something good come out of the tragedy. Grief counselors and therapy dogs were made available along with massages and pedicures. An interfaith service was scheduled for later in the day at a nearby park.

Freshman Jayden Jaus, 14, said the moment of silence

was "a bit emotional and a little intense" as the principal read the victims' names over the public address system.

Sophomore Julia Brighton, who suffered nightmares for months after the gunman killed three people in her classroom, placed flowers at the memorial outdoors instead of going inside and "putting myself through that."

Victims' families said they would spend the day quietly, visiting their loved ones' graves or participating in low-key events like a community walk.

Lori Alhadeff posted an open letter to her 14-year-old daughter Alyssa, who died in the shooting. Alhadeff remembered how Alyssa didn't want to go to school because she didn't have a valentine. But when she dropped her daughter off, she put a pair of diamond earrings in Alyssa's ears and gave her a chocolate bar to make her smile. They told each other, "I love you," and Alhadeff watched Alyssa walk away in a black and white dress and white sneakers: "Your long, dark hair dangled. Your makeup looked just right."

"The last time I saw you alive," wrote Alhadeff, who was elected to the Broward County school board after the shooting on a platform

pushing campus safety.

Victim Joaquin Oliver's girlfriend, senior Tori Gonzalez, organized a group of dozen students and alumni to read poems to a large crowd outside the school in the late afternoon. They brought a life-size statue of Oliver, who was 17.

"My mind runs each and every route that could have saved your life," she read tearfully. "It wasn't Cupid shooting arrows of love — it was an AR-15."

Hundreds turned out at a Parkland park for a late-evening community vigil. Bev Capasso, a nurse who treated some victims, said she hoped the ceremony "will help us heal. It's been a horrendous year."

Elsewhere around the country, at Broadman High in Youngstown, Ohio, the school rang a chime 17 times and honored local first responders. But in a sign of the times, an active shooter drill was also held.

Senior Jack Pendleton helped plan the day's anniversary activities. "We turn away from the dread and have to look more toward who's helping us," he said.

Students at Maryland's Bethesda Chevy Chase High School displayed 671 white T-shirts bearing the names of teenagers killed nationally by gun violence last year.

At Fort Lauderdale High, a 30-minute drive from Stoneman Douglas, junior Jake Lynch paused with 20 other students in his law class as the school observed its moment of silence.

"It's a permanent sore spot," Lynch said. "Forever, me going forward, I'll feel this day, and this time and those names. It reminds me of where I want the world to be. ... From suffering, better things come out."

In New Mexico, a student at V. Sue Cleveland High School fired a shot in a hall and ran away, authorities said. He was soon captured. No one was hurt.

The former student accused of opening fire with an AR-15 assault rifle in the Parkland attack, Nikolas Cruz, now 20, is awaiting trial. □



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Mudslide sweeps house off hill as storm pounds California

By **TERENCE CHEA and JOHN ANTCHAK**
Associated Press
SAUSALITO, Calif. (AP)

— Waves of heavy rain pounded California on Thursday, washing away a mountain highway, triggering a mudslide that destroyed homes, and forcing residents to flee communities scorched by wildfires last year.

The powerful system swept in from the Pacific Ocean and unleashed damaging rain, snow and wind across the U.S. West into Wyoming, Montana and Colorado after walloping Northern California and southern Oregon a day earlier.

The National Weather Service reported staggering rainfall amounts across California, including more than 9.4 inches (24 centimeters) over 48 hours at one location in the San Bernardino Mountains east of Los Angeles.

A mudslide in Sausalito, north of San Francisco, barreled over cars, uprooted trees and sent a home sliding down a hill and smashing into another house.

A woman was rescued from the splintered wreckage with only cuts and bruises. Susan Gordon was buried under a tree and mud for two hours while fire crews dug her out, her son wrote on an online fundraising page.

Chris Parkman said it's been years since a storm so powerful has hit the hillside community, where at least 50 properties were evacuated.

"We don't see the rain most of the year, so most of the year you feel safe. But when the big storms come, your safety factor is gone," he said.

A deluge southeast of Los Angeles washed away a section of a two-lane mountain highway. Photos by the state Department of Transportation showed about 75 feet (23 meters) of pavement completely collapsed along State Route 243 near the remote community of Idyllwild.

"We're basically stranded right now," said resident Gary Agner, adding that

several other roads were closed because of flooding and debris. "I'm glad I went to the grocery store yesterday."

The risk of flooding led officials to order people out of areas burned bare by a summer wildfire in the Santa Ana Mountains, with flash flood warnings blanketing a huge swath east and south of Los Angeles.

Authorities also told parts of artsy Laguna Beach to evacuate, while the desert resort city of Palm Springs urged residents to stay where they were because of flooded streets. Flood advisories extended east to Arizona.

Swift water rescue teams plucked motorists from cars trapped in flooded intersections across inland Southern California. Three people clung to trees with three dogs before being rescued along the Santa Ana River.

Weather was so severe that the Hollywood Walk of Fame had to postpone the dedication of a sidewalk star honoring the band Aerosmith. Knott's Berry Farm and Six Flags Magic Mountain theme parks closed.

Trouble also persisted in saturated Northern California, where thousands of people lost power and flood warnings were in effect for a large area of the upper Central Valley and around the San Francisco Bay Area. Downtown San Francisco saw more than 1.75 inches (4.4 centimeters) of rain over 24 hours.

A flooded creek led authorities to urge about 300 residents to leave a community some 20 miles (32 kilometers) west of Paradise, a town destroyed last year by the nation's deadliest wildfire in a century.

The storm followed more than a week of severe weather in the Pacific Northwest and was the latest in a series of storms that has all but eliminated drought-level dryness in California this winter. It's fueled by an atmospheric river — a plume of moisture stretching across the Pacific Ocean nearly to Hawaii.

Nearly 37 percent of California had no level of drought or abnormal dryness, the U.S. Drought Monitor reported Thursday. About 10.5 percent of the state was in moderate drought, just over 1.6 percent was in severe drought. The remainder was in the abnormally dry category. The numbers reflect data gathered up to Tuesday. □



Southern Marin Fire Department members search a crushed house in the aftermath of a mudslide that destroyed three homes on a hillside in Sausalito, Calif., Thursday, Feb. 14, 2019.
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Catalan ex-official testifies he is a 'political prisoner'



Catalan regional Vice-President, Oriol Junqueras, center, next to Catalan former Cabinet member Raul Romeva, left, during the trial at the Spanish Supreme Court in Madrid, Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019.

Associated Press

By ARITZ PARRA

The Associated Press

MADRID (AP) — A former Catalan official accused by Spanish prosecutors of leading a violent rebellion to create an independent republic testified at a top court in Madrid on Thursday that he considers himself "a political prisoner."

Oriol Junqueras, who was the vice president of the Catalan Cabinet that went ahead with a banned secession referendum in October 2017, was the first of a dozen separatist leaders to testify in the much antici-

pated Supreme Court trial. With ex-Catalan president Carles Puigdemont avoiding prosecution by fleeing to Belgium, Junqueras is the highest-ranking official prosecuted in the case. He faces up to 25 years behind bars if found guilty for rebellion and misuse of public funds.

Gesturing vividly with his hands and answering questions only from his lawyer, Junqueras emphatically rejected the charges and made a strong defense of the Catalan independence movement as non-violent.

"Any noble goal can be immoral if the mechanisms to achieve it are indecent," he said. "This is valid for the Catalan republic, for the Spanish monarchy, for Europe or anything else."

The leader of the Catalan left-wing pro-republic party had begun his testimony by telling the panel of seven judges that he is "being accused for my ideas and not for my deeds." He also declined to answer questions by prosecutors because he regards the trial as a "political" one.

"I consider myself a political prisoner," he said.

Previously, and responding to allegations made by the Catalans' defense attorneys, presiding Judge Manuel Marchena said that questioning during the trial would only be allowed to focus on facts, not ideology. The judge accepted some of the allegations by the defendants. He allowed them to answer questions in their Catalan mother tongue. □



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Pope seeks role for rural populations in addressing hunger

Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Pope Francis is urging global decision-makers in both the public and private sectors to help address poverty and hunger in rural areas by engaging the local population as "responsible architects" of progress.

Francis was addressing an annual session Thursday of the International Fund for Agricultural Development, a U.N. agency based in Rome dedicated to eradicating poverty and hunger in rural areas of the devel-

oping world.

The pope said "today more than ever we need to unite our efforts, reach consensus and reinforce our connections. The challenges we face are so intricate and complex that we cannot continue to confront them in an occasional way, with emergency resolutions."

He praised IFAD for results it has achieved by decentralizing its projects, encouraging regional co-operation and diversifying financial sources. □

UK's May suffers embarrassing defeat on Brexit strategy

By JILL LAWLESS

Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — British Prime Minister Theresa May suffered an embarrassing defeat by lawmakers Thursday in a vote that left her bid to secure a European Union divorce deal stuck between an intransigent EU and a resistant U.K. Parliament — with Brexit just six weeks away.

A rebellion by hard-core Brexit backers saw the House of Commons vote by 303 votes to 258 against a motion reiterating support for May's approach to Brexit — support expressed by lawmakers in votes just two weeks ago.

The defeat is symbolic rather than binding, but shows how weak May's hand is as she tries to secure changes to her divorce deal from the EU in order to win backing for it in Parliament. It is likely to leave EU leaders wondering whether May can win support for any kind of Brexit deal, given Britain's political instability.

May tried to put a positive spin on the result.

The prime minister's office said in a statement that



Britain's Prime Minister Theresa May leaves the Houses of Parliament in Westminster following a Brexit vote in the House of Commons, in London, Thursday Feb. 14, 2019.

Associated Press

"while we didn't secure the support of the Commons this evening," the government believed Parliament still wanted May to seek changes to the Brexit deal that lawmakers could support.

"The government will continue to pursue this with the EU to ensure we leave on time on 29th March," it said.

Others were blunter.

"What an absolute fiasco this is," said pro-EU Conservative lawmaker Anna Soubry. A leading pro-Brexit colleague, Bernard Jenkin, used the same word: "Fiasco."

The vote is the latest outbreak of Brexit-driven chaos that is roiling Britain's Parliament and imperiling

Britain's orderly exit from the EU.

Two weeks ago, Parliament sent a contradictory message, voting to send May back to Brussels to seek changes to a section of the withdrawal agreement intended to ensure an open border between the U.K.'s Northern Ireland and EU member Ireland after Brex-

it.

But lawmakers also voted to rule out a "no-deal" exit, though without signaling how that should happen.

On Thursday the government was defeated on an uncontroversial-sounding motion reiterating the earlier decision, when hard-line pro-Brexit lawmakers in the governing Conservatives abstained, accusing the government of effectively ruling out the threat of leaving the EU without an agreement on departure terms and future relations, a move they say undermines Britain's bargaining position.

"Conservative MPs (members of Parliament) really ought not to be associated with anything, express or implied, which seems to take 'no deal' off the table," Brexit-backing Conservative lawmaker Steve Baker tweeted before the vote. Pro-EU lawmakers in Britain's divided Parliament feel the opposite. They fear time is running out to seal a deal before Britain topples off a "no-deal" cliff, with economically devastating results. □

EU voices concern as Romania moves to block prosecutor

ALISON MUTLER

Associated Press

BUCHAREST, Romania (AP)

— Prosecutors applying for the post of European chief prosecutor must be treated fairly, the European Commission said Thursday, after Romania moved to block one of its own nationals.

Commission spokesman Margaritis Schinas said Brussels is following the case closely adding it is crucial that candidates put forward by an independent selection panel are "treated fairly."

He spoke after Romanian Justice Minister Tudorel Toader wrote to EU justice ministers accusing Laura Codruta Kovesi, the former chief anti-corruption prosecutor, of signing "secret and anti-democratic pacts" with the intelligence agency in corruption and national security probes. Kovesi has been shortlisted

to lead the European Public Prosecutor's Office, due to become operational at the end of 2020.

Toader removed Kovesi from her post last year, citing mismanagement and asserting she overstepped her authority. Some viewed the dismissal as politically motivated. During her five-year tenure at the National Anti-Corruption Directorate, Kovesi successfully prosecuted hundreds of officials including ministers, mayors and state company directors.

Separately, Kovesi is suing Romania's government in the European Court of Human Rights over her firing. She says she was dismissed unfairly and had her rights violated when she was denied the right to appeal a Constitutional Court decision that ordered her firing based on the minister's recommendation.

On Wednesday, Kovesi said prosecutors are probing her for official misconduct and bribery. She denies wrongdoing. She says she will fly to Brussels Friday for a European Parliament hearing about the post.

Romanian President Klaus Iohannis, an opponent of the government, voiced concern about the development Thursday, saying probes of prosecutors and magistrates shouldn't be used as "a political instrument" or to intimidate prosecutors. He called for "the law to be strictly respected," in Kovesi's case, and the situation "rapidly clarified."

Kovesi herself said: "It's clear that ... somebody is trying to stop this procedure," in a radio interview Wednesday. "They're trying to stop me getting this post as ... I am the favorite for the job." Romania's ruling Social De-



In this file photo dated Thursday, Feb. 23, 2017, Romania's chief anti-corruption prosecutor Laura Codruta Kovesi, who heads the country's anti-graft agency (DNA), sits after presenting the unit's annual report, at the Military Circle, in Bucharest, Romania.

Associated Press

mocracy Party embarked on a contentious judicial overhaul two years ago, sparking protests. Critics, including the EU and the U.S., claimed the changes would undermine the independence of the judiciary and efforts to combat high-

level corruption.

Iohannis reiterated those concerns Thursday, telling the government to "stop taking even more steps backward and taking Romania off its European path, as a democratic state." □

Pence urges Europe to quit Iran deal, stop busting sanctions

By MATTHEW LEE

Associated Press

WARSAW, Poland (AP)

— The Trump administration lashed out at some of America's closest traditional allies Thursday, accusing Britain, France and Germany of trying to bust U.S. sanctions against Iran and calling on European nations to join the United States in withdrawing from the Iranian nuclear deal.

In an unusually blunt speech to a Middle East conference in Poland, U.S. Vice President Mike Pence slammed the three countries and the European Union as a whole for remaining parties to the landmark 2015 agreement after President Donald Trump withdrew from it last year and re-imposed tough sanctions on Iran.

The harsh criticism threatened to further chill U.S.-European ties that are already badly strained on many issues, including trade and defense spending. And it underscored the stark two-year trans-Atlantic divide over Iran that manifested itself again ahead of the Warsaw conference co-hosted by the U.S. and Poland.

France and Germany declined to send their top diplomats to the ministerial-level meeting. EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini also stayed away due to concerns it would become an anti-Iran vehicle. Britain, France and Germany, along with the rest of the EU, continue to support the nuclear deal as the best way to prevent Iran from developing atomic weapons.

At the close of the conference, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and his Polish counterpart Jacek Czaputowicz both noted differences of opinion over policies toward Iran. But, they said all participants agreed on the threat posed by the country, which is celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Islamic Revolution this week.

"There was not a defender of Iran in the room," Pompeo said, adding that the U.S. and Europe were still



United States Vice President Mike Pence, right, talks to the media during a bilateral meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, left, in Warsaw, Poland, Thursday, Feb. 14, 2019.

Associated Press

capable of working together on the issue.

Czaputowicz said the U.S. and Europe "share the same diagnosis of the situation," which is "the negative role played by Iran." But he also noted that the U.S. and Europe differ on how to approach the matter.

In his earlier speech, Pence showed just how sharp that difference is.

He was harshly critical of Britain, France and Germany for unveiling a new financial mechanism last month that U.S. officials believe is intended to keep the nuclear deal alive by evading American sanctions. Pence praised other nations for complying with U.S. sanctions by reducing Iranian oil imports, but he said the Europeans fell short.

"Sadly, some of our leading European partners have not been nearly as cooperative," Pence said. "In fact, they have led the effort to create mechanisms to break up our sanctions." He said the mechanism, a barter-type payment system that is designed to allow businesses to skirt direct financial transactions with Iran, is "an effort to break American sanctions against Iran's murderous regime."

"It's an ill-advised step that that will only strengthen

Iran, weaken the EU, and create still more distance between Europe and the United States," the vice president said.

Pence then called for Europe to abandon the nuclear agreement altogether, making explicit a demand that Trump administration officials had previously only hinted at.

"The time has come for our European partners to withdraw from the Iran nuclear deal and join with us as we bring the economic and diplomatic pressure necessary to give the Iranian people, the region and the world the peace security and freedom they deserve," he said.

Niels Annen, a German deputy foreign minister who participated in the conference, told reporters after Pence spoke that Europe has a common position on the need to preserve the nuclear deal, and he dismissed U.S. concerns about the new financial mechanism. He said Germany believes both pressure and nuclear deal need to be maintained.

"We believe we need both," he said. "We need pressure on Iran ... but we also need cooperation on the basis of this international agreement and we will continue to pursue this together."

Germany, Britain and

France have vigorously defended the new payment system as necessary to preserve the Iran accord, under which Tehran was granted billions of dollars in sanctions relief in exchange for curbs on its nuclear program.

They are also highly unlikely to withdraw from the agreement, a signature foreign policy achievement of the Obama administration. Their governments have repeatedly expressed support for it since Trump declared the U.S. would pull out.

The U.N.'s atomic watchdog and Trump's own intelligence chiefs have said Iran remains in compliance with the agreement despite the U.S. withdrawal.

Pence, however, said Iran's adherence to the deal's terms is irrelevant. He said the accord was fatally flawed to begin with as it does not prevent Iran from obtaining the technology or material to eventually develop a nuclear weapon over time.

"Compliance is not the issue; the deal is the issue," he said, calling Iran the "single greatest threat" to security in the Middle East. Iran was not invited to the Warsaw conference and called the event a "circus" aimed at "demonizing" the country.

Because of European reluctance to attend a conference focused only on Iran, Pompeo and other U.S. officials had sought to broaden the scope to include other Middle East topics. The schedule included sessions on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Syria, Yemen, cybercrime and terrorism.

"No one country will dominate the discussion today, nor will any one issue dominate our talks," Pompeo said at the opening of the conference.

But Pence's comments, as well as earlier remarks by Pompeo, made clear the meeting was largely focused on isolating Iran.

Before the event opened, Pompeo met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and said, "You can't achieve peace and stability in the Middle East without confronting Iran. It's just not possible."

Netanyahu's office released a video from a closed session of the conference in which Bahrain Foreign Minister Khalid Al Khalifa tells an audience that he grew up believing the Israeli-Palestinian dispute is "the most important issue" in the region.

But later, he said, "we saw a more toxic one, in fact the most toxic in our modern history, which came from the Islamic Republic, from Iran."

Pence opened his keynote address by lauding the Trump administration's commitment to fighting "radical Islamic terrorism," a term he used in some form at least seven times.

He hailed gains made against the Islamic State group in Iraq and Syria, where the extremists are being ousted from their last remaining areas of control. Despite Trump's abrupt decision to withdraw American troops from Syria, Pence said the U.S. would remain in the region to ensure the militant organization does not return.

"We will continue to hunt down the remnants of ISIS wherever and whenever they rear their ugly head," he said. □



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Car bomb kills 33 Indian soldiers, wounds 20 in Kashmir

 By AIJAZ HUSSAIN
 Associated Press

SRINAGAR, India (AP) —

At least 33 soldiers were killed and about 20 others wounded Thursday in a car bomb attack on a paramilitary convoy along a key highway in Indian-controlled Kashmir, security officials said. It was one of the deadliest car bombings in the disputed region's history.

Officials said a local Kashmiri militant rammed an explosive-laden van into the convoy, targeting a bus carrying at least 35 soldiers. Senior police officer Muneer Ahmed Khan said the attack occurred as the convoy reached southern Lethpora town on the outskirts of the main city of Srinagar. He said the bus was destroyed and at least five other vehicles were damaged by the blast.

Sanjay Sharma, a spokes-



Indian paramilitary soldiers carry the remains of colleagues at the site of an explosion in Pampore, Indian-controlled Kashmir, Thursday, Feb. 14, 2019.

Associated Press

man for India's paramilitary Central Reserve Police Force, said many of the injured were in critical condition. "The blast was so

powerful that one cannot recognize whether the vehicle was a bus or a truck. Just pieces of mangled steel remain of the vehicle,"

he said.

Videos circulated by local news groups showed ambulances rushing to the site and people running as

smoke billowed from the damaged vehicles. Debris and body parts littered the road.

Authorities closed the highway following the blast. Police officer Khan said soldiers and counterinsurgency police reinforcements were deployed in the area and were conducting searches.

The Greater Kashmir newspaper reported that militant group Jaish-e-Mohammed claimed responsibility for the attack.

A pre-recorded nine-minute video, circulated on social media sites, showed the purported attacker in combat clothes and surrounded by guns and grenades.

Later Thursday, thousands of people, chanting slogans such as "Go India, go back," marched to the militant's village in solidarity.

□

Ahead of Nigeria election, opposition alleges ghost voters

By RODNEY MUHUMUZA

ABUJA, Nigeria (AP) —

Nigeria's main opposition party charged Thursday that the election commission has kept more than 1 million ghost voters on the national register, raising fears of vote rigging ahead of Saturday's presidential election.

The electoral commission "did not in fact do a clean-up of the register of voters" before publishing it, Uche Secondus, chairman of the opposition People's Democratic Party, told a news conference in the capital, Abuja.

"A sick narrative has emerged, one of systemic and systematic rigging, manipulation of the true record of the voters' register and a cabal you can no

longer trust with the trajectory and growth of democracy and nation," he said. He also alleged "a coordinated approach to register foreigners" as voters.

The People's Democratic Party, whose presidential candidate is Atiku Abubakar, is Nigeria's main opposition party. Allegations of ghost voters are bound to raise tensions in what is widely seen as a close contest between Abubakar, a former vice president, and President Muhammadu Buhari.

The electoral commission says 84 million people are registered to vote in this country of 190 million.

A spokesman for the electoral commission did not respond to requests for a comment.

The opposition and some election observers also have expressed concern about military deployments in part of southeastern Nigeria where separatists are active.

Buhari and Abubakar renewed a pledge for a peaceful poll on Wednesday. Both leaders vowed to contribute to a free and fair election in Africa's most populous country and refrain from "religious incitement" or ethnic profiling.

The push for candidates to publicly renew their peace vow, first made in December, picked up in recent days after the governor of Kaduna state declared on television that anyone who came to Nigeria to intervene in the election "would go back in body bags."



Nigerian women attend an inter-faith prayer rally organized by the Freedom and Justice Party in Abuja, Nigeria, Thursday Feb. 14, 2019.

Associated Press

Buhari was elected to his first term in 2015, the first time in Nigerian history that an opposition party democratically won power, and his first few months in office

were full of optimism.

But his government now faces widespread discontent over rising unemployment and insecurity in some parts of the country. □

Neglect, rain threatening 'Sistine Chapel of the Andes'

By CARLOS VALDEZ

CURAHUARA DE CARANGAS, Bolivia (AP) — A buttress supporting an adobe wall has collapsed and grass overgrows the patio of the four-century-old church whose dazzling murals depicting biblical scenes and remote location high atop a Bolivian plateau have earned it the nickname the "Sistine Chapel of the Andes."

Abandonment and heavy rains are threatening one of the continent's oldest churches in Curahuara de Carangas, an impoverished Aymara town in Oruro province that saw many of its residents migrate to bigger cities in past decades, a flow that disrupted the traditional, communal system for maintaining the church.

"Each ayllu (indigenous community) had their section of the temple and took care of it. The work was collective based on ayni (pre-Hispanic communal service). That's how it worked until the 1980s. Migration has changed customs,"

said historian Carmen Beatriz Loza, head of the heritage unit at Bolivia's Ministry of Cultures. "Now the community expects vertical aid from the government."



In this Feb. 9, 2019 photo, an architect, an expert in restoration, enters the local church in Curahuara de Carangas, Bolivia.

Associated Press

care of it. The work was collective based on ayni (pre-Hispanic communal service). That's how it worked until the 1980s. Migration has changed customs,"

said historian Carmen Beatriz Loza, head of the heritage unit at Bolivia's Ministry of Cultures. "Now the community expects vertical aid from the government."

Dust covering the temple's candelabras and furniture and the bird droppings coating its bell reflect this neglect. Heavy rains recently caused one of its

buttresses to weaken and fall.

Facing an emergency, officials from the Roman Catholic Church, Bolivia's culture ministry and the local government are planning to meet to figure out a plan to save the church, built between 1570 and 1608. While no plan has been formalized, two architects arrived last week to look at the damage and the government has a responsibility to maintain the Curahuara church since it is registered as a national monument.

On the outside, the church looks like anything but the Sistine Chapel in Vatican City. Its rough walls of adobe and straw give it the appearance of a humble, rural chapel. But opening its doors and entering, one is overwhelmed by the brilliantly colored paintings that cover its walls, ceilings and cupula. □

Venezuela prosecutor to investigate Guaido appointments

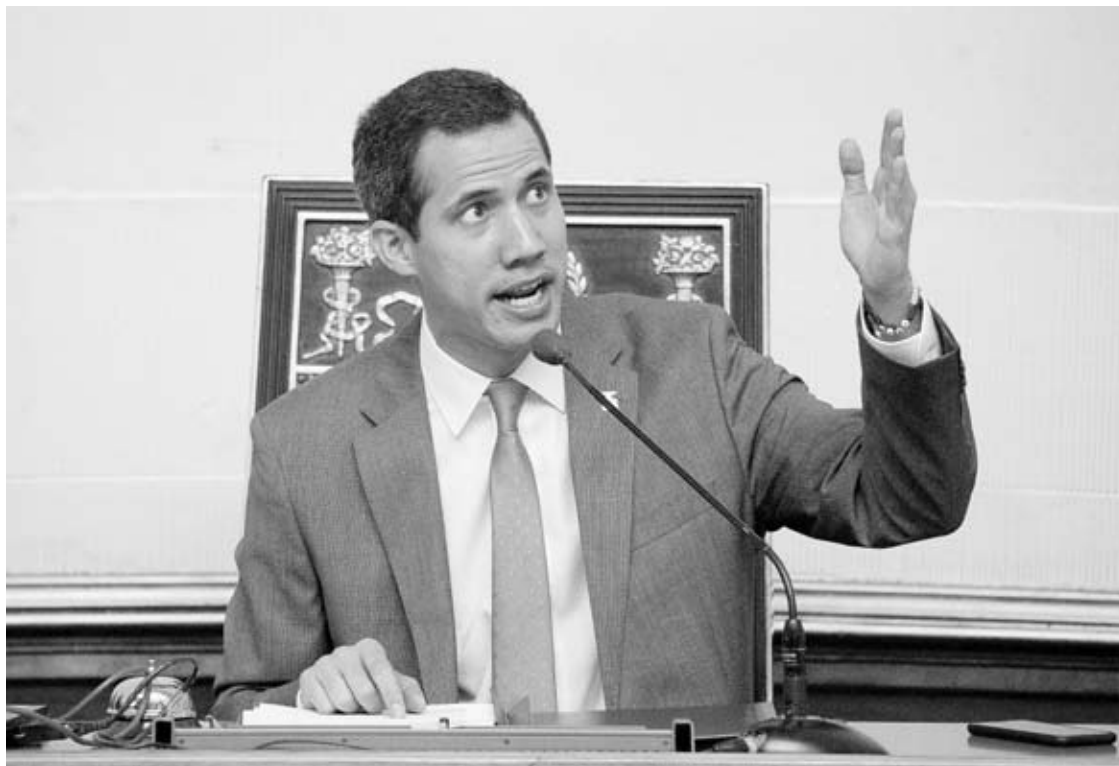
Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — Venezuela's chief prosecutor said Thursday he has launched an investigation into opposition leader Juan Guaido's appointment of a transitional board of directors for the state oil company.

Attorney General Tarek William Saab said the appointments by Guaido and his National Assembly are part of an illegal power grab backed by foreign governments. He also said that ambassadors of Guaido's self-declared interim government are being investigated as part of the probe.

"Clearly, this legislative body through criminal means pretends to seize national powers," Saab said in a news conference broadcast on state TV, calling the move part of a "circus."

Guaido declared last month that he has a constitutional right to presidential power as head of the opposition-controlled National Assembly. He currently has support from the U.S. and about 60 countries



Venezuela's self proclaimed interim president and President of the National Assembly Juan Guaido, speaks during a session at the National Assembly, in Caracas, Venezuela, Wednesday, Feb. 13, 2019.

Associated Press

which are urging President Nicolas Maduro to step down.

Saab said he's looking into the board members who were designated on Wednesday to oversee PDVSA and its Houston-based subsidiary Citgo. Guaido

has also been put under investigation and been forbidden from leaving the country, but has managed to avoid arrest.

The struggle for control of Venezuela could now come to a potentially violent head on Feb. 23, when

Guaido said he will try to run caravans of U.S. humanitarian aid across the Colombian border into Venezuela. The United States and other countries will also send supplies through Brazil and the Caribbean island of Curaçao.

Maduro has blocked the emergency food and medicine from entering and says that the intervention is part of a U.S. coup attempt.

An oil-rich nation, Venezuela was once among Latin America's wealthiest and politically stable nations. However, oil production has collapsed to one-third of historic output, which critics blame on two decades of socialist rule.

The administration of U.S. President Donald Trump recently lodged sanctions that it says could further cripple the country by cutting off an estimated \$11 billion in cash-flow to Maduro's government this year. On Thursday, the White House said that Trump will travel to Florida International University in Miami to warn of "the dangers of socialism" in a Monday speech in support of Guaido.

Trump is looking to draw a contrast with the policies of progressive Democrats, which he has branded as "socialist" as he gears up for re-election. □

LOCAL



The French Connection & a Big Green Egg



EAGLE BEACH — It may sound like a boy's adventure movie, but it is actually a man's passion event. Are you a foodie, do you love the beach and are you stoked about a great cocktail in an ever greater vibe? Than tune in this coming Sunday February 17th at The Beach Bar opposite the Divi Village Golf & Beach Resort, recently opened and already a hit!

Now back to the pearl of that coming Sunday night, or shall we say rough diamond referring to the top chef who will live prepare your food: Ijsbrant Wilbreninck from the Netherlands. He is Dutch, but grew up in France where he was trained the hard way in the field of the best chefs in the world. There we have it: the French connection. "When I was 14 years old, I started working in a restaurants kitchen. In France you are only to be called a chef when you have experience, not only the fancy degree from a hospitality management school. You need to learn from the maestros and do it for the passion, not for the money", Ijsbrant explains. Exactly that passion is what drives him and made him an example for many chefs in Europe, he even teaches restaurant kitchens in the Netherlands to work with that passion in their mind. "Only than you create miracles." Ijsbrant is a what-you-see-is-what-you get guy, his straightforwardness reflects in his delicious dishes: pure, honest and different.



The Egg

Ijsbrant will cook that night on an egg. Yes, you read it well, on a big, green egg. This is the brand name of a kamado-style ceramic charcoal barbecue cooker. The Egg is a versatile cooking device capable of acting as a grill, oven, or smoker. It is perfect for retaining moisture and heat within the grill and that is exactly what makes the EGG so great! ... The ceramic helps keep the moisture in the food for succulent meats and food.

The Food

The chef has this fusion of French and Dutch cuisine running through his veins, expressed into his dishes. He uses the spices that are familiar to the Dutch kitchen and the finesse of the French culinary art. This time he will of course add some Caribbean flavors, to begin with the ingredients as fresh mangos, day-caught shrimps that combine with homemade tomato salsa and typical French Flammkuchen bread. Tapas sized dishes will be on the menu, but also main portions are a choice. The Beach Bar has an awesome selection of signature cocktails that go great with the Green Egg surprises of chef Ijsbrant. This is not your ordinary dinner, this is an experience that is topped off with an amazing sunset while you chill on the lounge sets with on the background the groovy sounds of DJ's. □

EVENT

4 – 8 PM The Beach Bar
(opposite the Divi Village Golf & Beach Resort)
Chef Ijsbrant Wilbreninck from the Netherlands

Beach B.A.R

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Playa Linda partners with "Pack for a Purpose" Donations for ARF Aruba begin to roll on in



PALM BEACH – Playa Linda Beach Resort recently launched its partnership with "Pack for a Purpose", which encourages travelers to make use of their extra luggage space and bring needed supplies to help support a chosen, local foundation. After the introduction of the initiative, Playa Linda members

and guests have responded with shows of support. The first donation came in January, after the recent launch, with visitors from Pennsylvania, Mr. Sykes and Ms. Misthal, responding with pet supply donations for the Aruba Relief Foundation (ARF) Aruba.

Pack for a Purpose car-

ries the message of "make your travels meaningful" by pairing travellers with the needs of community projects around the world. Since 2010, it has helped hundreds of projects in places in Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean, by focusing in on five general areas: education, health, child welfare, animal welfare,



and socioeconomic development.

In Aruba, the partnership between Playa Linda and Pack for a Purpose helps facilitate ARF Aruba gain much needed supplies, including pet food, toys and basic medical goods, which can fit in the extra space in a suitcase, and goes directly to help Aruba's street dogs. ARF Aruba works to eliminate the street animal population through sterilization, adoption, and education.

Visitors to Aruba are encouraged to participate by visiting the Pack for a Purpose website: [https://www.packforapurpose.org/destinations/caribbean/aruba/playa-linda-](https://www.packforapurpose.org/destinations/caribbean/aruba/playa-linda)

beach-resort/ where they can choose an item or items from ARF Aruba's specific needs list. Once in Aruba, those items can be dropped off at the Playa Linda Beach Resort, which will ensure it gets to ARF Aruba.

"We listened to our members and guests, who have witnessed stray dogs by the resort, and chose a foundation which we thought could make the biggest difference," explains Playa Linda Director of Operations Sulaika Kelly. "By working together, we are able to give back in meaningful ways and show our appreciation for our beloved Aruban community. Gratitude enhances every experience in life." □

Travel Tips

Aeropuerto Internacional
Reina Beatrix
ARUBA AIRPORT AUTHORITY N.V.

1. When checking-in, you will always need your valid passport, along with your ticket, e-ticket receipt or e-ticket confirmation. For some countries a Visa is also required.
2. For all US-bound departures, check-in three hours before your scheduled departure time.
3. For all US-bound flights, after check-in, leave building through the exit on the left side of building; follow the signs and head towards local immigrations, main security screening, shopping area and the departure gates. Aruba Airport provides full US Pre-Clearance service.
4. For all Non US departures, check-in may vary between airlines and destinations; always consult your airline for more information. Being at the airport 3 hours before your departure flight is always safe.
5. For all Non US flights, after check-in, leave building through the exit on the right side of building; follow the signs and head towards Local immigrations, main security screening, shopping area and the departure gates.
6. If traveling with a carry-on, there are restrictions on liquids, gels and aerosols you can carry in your carry-on luggage. Always check with your airline on limitations.
7. Always check the weight limit of your baggage; excess weight may result in penalty fees.
8. Always label your bags and suitcases with your name, address and phone number.
9. Always leave all carry-on items unlocked while passing through screening points to not cause delays if these need to be inspected.
10. Avoid wearing big belt buckles, clothing with metal buttons, lots of jewelry etc. when traveling. If you have these on, remove all metal items and place these in a tray for screening. It is advisable to put all metal items in your carry-on luggage until you clear security. This will help speed up the process.
11. Remove shoes at checkpoint and place in tray for x-ray machine screening.
12. All electronic items should be placed in tray outside their case for x-ray screening.
13. Avoid packing foods and beverages in your check-in baggage. When traveling to the US, you have to comply with the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. More information <https://www.usda.gov/>.
14. If traveling with medication, please pack these in your carry-on luggage in their original packaging.
15. If you medical documentation, present this to the security checkpoint screener to inform them. The documentation is not required and will not exempt you from the screening process.
16. Take note of inadmissible items such as sharp objects, sporting goods, guns and firearms, martial arts and self-defense items, tools, explosive materials, flammable items, disabling chemicals and other items when traveling. More information available on www.airportaruba.com.



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The Aruba Tourism Authority honor loyal visitors on the island

EAGLE BEACH —Recently, Kimberley Richardson of the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure to honor Aruba's loyal and friendly visitors as Distinguished Visitor and Goodwill Ambassador. The Distinguished visitor certificate is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism, as a token of appreciation to the guests who visit Aruba 10 years and more consecutively. The Goodwill Ambassador certificate is presented to guests who visit Aruba 20 years and more consecutively.

The honorees were the lovely couple Luis Alvarez and Ana Galindo from Spain together with Richard and Jan Benedict from USA. It is incredible to see how Aruba receives so many people from so many countries, and how they all keep choosing Aruba after so many years!

This group of wonderful people stated that they love the island very much, especially for its safety, the year-round sunny weather, nice sandy beaches, and Aruba's warm and friendly people.

Ms. Richardson together with the representatives of the Divi Phoenix presented the certificate to the honorees, and also handed over some presents and thanked them for choosing Aruba as their favorite vacation destination and as their home away from home. □



Aruba Marriott celebrates its Carnival Queens



PALM BEACH, ARUBA – On Friday, February 8th associates from different departments, together with family and friends gathered at Centro di Bario Noord to cheer for their favorite queen at the Aruba Marriott's 5th Carnival Queen Election.

The candidates for Carnival Queen 2019 were Elysha Browne of Activities Surf Club, Xerxia Leon of Food & Beverage Resort, Yaneka Nugent of Front Desk Ocean Club, Juneida Chayadi of Finance Department, Miangela (Mia) Croes of Reserva-

tions, Revenue, Sales & Marketing Department, Jasmine Irausquin of Ruth's Chris Steak House, and Amandae (Dae) Hereira of Loss Prevention Department.

The candidates for Mrs. Carnival 2019 were Maria Rodriguez of Housekeeping Ocean Club, Yazira Feliciano of Stellaris Casino, Debbie Mauricio of "At Your Service", and Anny Kock of Engineering Surf Club. And the candidate for LGBT Queen 2019 was Kristopher (Kristina) Oehlers of Food & Beverage Resort.



At the end of a fun filled night full of creativity, colorful costumes and entertaining shows, the judges named the following candidates the winners of the Aruba Marriott Carnival Queen Election.

Carnival Queen Category:

- Best Make-Up - Jasmine Irausquin - Ruth's Chris Steak House
- Best Speech - Juneida Chayadi - Finance Department
- Best Show - Xerxia Leon - Food & Beverage Resort
- Best Costume - Miangela Croes - Reservations, Revenue, Sales & Marketing Department
- 2nd Runner Up - Xerxia Leon - Food & Beverage Resort
- 1st Runner Up - Miangela Croes - Reservations, Revenue, Sales & Marketing Department
- Carnival Queen 2019 - Juneida Chayadi - Finance Department

Mrs. Carnival Category:

- Best Speech - Yazira Feliciano - Stellaris Casino
- Best Show - Debbie Mauricio - At Your Service
- Best Costume - Maria Rodriguez - Housekeeping Ocean Club

- 1st Runner Up - Yazira Feliciano - Stellaris Casino
- Mrs. Carnival 2019 - Debbie Mauricio - At Your Service

LGBT Carnival Queen Category:

- LGBT Carnival Queen 2019 - Kristopher (Kristina) Oehlers - Food & Beverage Resort

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SPORTS



Darrell Wallace Jr. takes a moment before answering a question during an interview at NASCAR Daytona 500 auto racing media day at Daytona International Speedway, Wednesday, Feb. 13, 2019, in Daytona Beach, Fla.

Associated Press

Dillon, Wallace try and rekindle Daytona 500 magic

By DAN GELSTON

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Austin Dillon would fly home from another miserable race last year — say, a 35th-place finish at Talladega or a 37th at Chicagoland — and try and comfort himself with thoughts of when he was feeling sky high.

"Every time you have a bad race, you're justifying it," Dillon said. "Well, we won the (Daytona) 500, you know."

Bubba Wallace was the feel-good story as the rookie driver who flourished at Daytona. He was second behind Dillon for the highest finish ever in the race for a black driver, and threw a family reunion on the dais when his teary-eyed mom and sister crashed the party.

Continued on Page 22

PAINTING THE TOWNS



T-Wolves overcome Harden's 42 to top Rockets 121-111

Minnesota Timberwolves' Karl-Anthony Towns, left, goes in for a layup as Houston Rockets' Chris Paul defends in the first half of an NBA basketball game, Wednesday, Feb. 13, 2019, in Minneapolis.

Associated Press
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Shiffrin 1, Vlhova 1: Slalom to decide queen of ski worlds

By STEVE DOUGLAS

AP Sports Writer

ARE, Sweden (AP) — Mikaela Shiffrin 1, Petra Vlhova 1: Over to the slalom to determine who is the queen of the skiing world championships.

Vlhova won the latest episode of what is rapidly emerging as the biggest female rivalry in the sport by capturing gold in the giant slalom on Thursday to become Slovakia's first world champion.

Coping best in winds that reached 70 kph (43.5 mph) amid unseasonably mild temperatures in central Sweden, Vlhova used her size and power to negate a 0.19-second deficit to Viktoria Rebensburg after the first run and beat the German by 0.14 seconds.

Shiffrin took bronze to add to the gold medal she won in the super-G on the opening day of competition.

Asked if the slalom on Saturday will determine the best female ski racer of the championships, Vlhova — the gold medal round her neck — leaned back on the sofa, made herself comfortable, and had a twinkle in her eye.

"We will see on Saturday, she said, "but sure it will be a good fight with Miki."



Slovakia's Petra Vlhova, center, shows her gold medal of the women's giant slalom, flanked by silver medal's winner Germany's Viktoria Rebensburg, left, and bronze medallist United States' Mikaela Shiffrin at the alpine ski World Championships in Are, Sweden, Thursday, Feb. 14, 2019.

Associated Press

Aged 23 like Shiffrin, Vlhova is proving to be the biggest threat to the American's dominance of Alpine skiing. The Slovakian is the only racer to beat Shiffrin in slalom this season and she also won two giant slaloms on the World Cup circuit recently — tying with Shiffrin in the final GS before the worlds.

This win, which added to the silver she won in the Alpine combined on Friday, took her to a new level.

"Finally," Vlhova said, "I showed to everyone who is Petra from Slovakia." Shiffrin knows about her, all right.

"It's motivation," she said. "It's inspiring in some ways." Shiffrin said she lost some self-belief once she saw the conditions in the morning, when it rained for the second straight day to add to the strong winds that forced organizers once again to shorten the course.

There was already added

external pressure on the American after she chose to skip the combined — to the surprise of some, including Lindsey Vonn — to preserve energy for the giant slalom and slalom. The careful planning didn't pay off.

Shiffrin was 0.44 seconds off Rebensburg's lead following the first run, after which she acknowledged that she struggled to get a "response from the surface." It meant, she said, that she

skied "a little too safe."

Determined to ski more aggressively in the second leg under floodlights, Shiffrin turned in only the sixth fastest run and ended up happy just to claim third place for her sixth world championship medal — just two off the American record held by Vonn.

"Coming away tonight with a bronze, after a gold in super-G, is very much a dream come true," Shiffrin said.

It was so windy ahead of the second run that organizers removed the banner above the finishing line. Shiffrin said the gusts pushed her backward at the starting gate.

Vlhova, taller and more robust than Shiffrin, relished the conditions. She even overcame crashing into a gate in between the second and third checkpoints of the second run, which saw her briefly lose control. Racing second to last, she leaned back and clenched her fists after beating the time of Shiffrin. Then she put her hands to her head when Rebensburg crossed the line with the second-best time even though the 2010 Olympic champion had a lead of 0.40 seconds at the third checkpoint. □

Five-time winner Webb 2 strokes behind at Australian Open

ADELAIDE, Australia (AP) —

Karrie Webb's bid for a sixth Women's Australian Open title began with a 5-under 67 at The Grange, leaving her two strokes behind first-round leaders Jodi Ewart Shadoff and Wei-Ling Hsu. English player Ewart Shadoff had a bogey-free 65 in calm morning weather Thursday, which included four consecutive birdies from the seventh through 10th holes. Hsu had it tougher in the afternoon but still managed five back-nine birdies.

"Perfect conditions ... I hit some really close shots and holed some good putts," Ewart Shadoff said. "Overall, I just hit the ball well."

Defending champion Jin Young Ko was among those tied for sixth with a



In this June 27, 2018, file photo, Karrie Webb, of Australia, watches her tee shot on the 17th hole during a practice round for the KPMG Women's PGA Championship golf tournament at Kemper Lakes Golf Course in Lake Zurich, Ill.

Associated Press

68, along with Americans Kristen Gillman and Jackie Stoelting.

Former No. 1 Lydia Ko had four bogeys in a 71. Current

No. 1 Ariya Jutanugarn had two double bogeys and two bogeys in a 76. British veteran Laura Davies shot 74, along with American

Morgan Pressel.

Ewart Shadoff is ranked 59th in the world and has made steady improvement in recent years without winning a tournament as a professional. She has twice represented Europe in the Solheim Cup.

The 44-year-old Webb played just eight tournaments last year and missed the cut in the U.S. Open and British Open.

Webb has not played full-time since 2017. She spent four months in Australia last year at her Townsville, north Queensland home base, and when she teed it up last week in Barwon Heads in the Vic Open, it was her first competitive outing for almost eight months.

Webb, who finished tied for third with Madelene

Sagstrom and Bronte Law, started on the back nine Thursday and was 4-under through eight holes. Her only bogey came on the par-4 sixth hole.

"It's not easy to get off to a good start and be in position from day one and not feel like you're catching up on Friday," Webb said. "I hit some good shots and saw some putts go in, so I felt really comfortable there for about 11 holes."

"Then it got a little scratchy there through the middle. But I hung in there and managed to birdie the eighth, which was my second-last hole, which is a nice way to finish. I made the most of the opportunities I had."

Webb won previous Australian Opens in 2000, 2002, 2007, 2008 and 2014. □

AP source: Alliance had conversation with Kaepernick

By BARRY WILNER
AP Pro Football Writer

A person with knowledge of the conversation tells The Associated Press that the new Alliance of American Football spoke with Colin Kaepernick during its development about joining the league.

But Kaepernick wanted \$20 million or more to consider playing with the league that had its debut last weekend.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity Thursday because neither side has publicly acknowledged such talks.

The Alliance says its mission is to provide opportunities for players not in the NFL to continue their careers, with a possibility they could entice NFL teams to sign them once the AAF season concludes at the end of April. The league also approached Tim Tebow, who said he wanted to continue pursuing his baseball career. Tebow currently is in the New York Mets' spring training camp.

A message from the AP to Kaepernick's representatives was not immediately answered.

Kaepernick, then with the San Francisco 49ers, helped start a wave of protests about social and racial injustice in 2016 by

kneeling during the national anthem at games. He has not played the last two seasons and has brought a lawsuit against the NFL for collusion to keep him out of the league.

He also fits the description for potential Alliance players, though his contract demands don't fit with the league's financial structure. After all, the AAF is entering its second weekend.

Players earn \$225,000 over three years in the Alliance, but they also are free beginning in May to pursue NFL careers.

Should they not catch on there, they are obligated to return to the AAF next season.

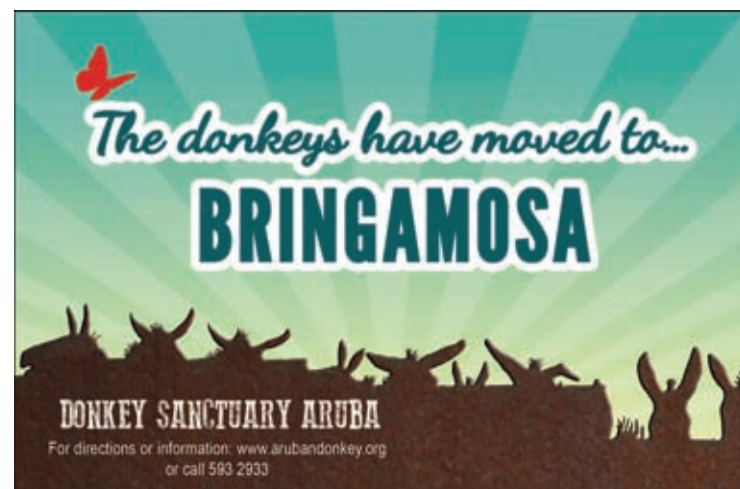
More than 80 percent of Alliance players spent some time in an NFL camp or on a roster. None is a star; the rare NFL first-round draft pick in the AAF is Birmingham running back Trent Richardson, who flamed out with the Browns and Colts, but who league co-founder Bill Polian, a Pro Football Hall of Fame executive, says could be "fast approaching" stardom in the Alliance after his strong debut.

It's uncertain if Kaepernick ever will play football again, but at his asking price, the only place would be the NFL. □



In this Oct. 11, 2018, file photo, former NFL football quarterback Colin Kaepernick attends the W.E.B. Du Bois Medal ceremonies at Harvard University in Cambridge, Mass.

Associated Press



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T-Wolves overcome Harden's 42 to top Houston 121-111

By The Associated Press
MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Jeff Teague scored 27 points, Karl-Anthony Towns had 25 and the Minnesota Timberwolves overcame James Harden's 42 points to beat the Houston Rockets 121-111 on Wednesday night.

Harden had his 31st consecutive game with 30 or more points, tying Wilt Chamberlain for the second-longest streak in league history. The NBA's leading scorer passed the 30-point mark on his 15th four-point play of the season, getting Josh Okogie in the air with one of his trademark step-back 3s to put Houston up 74-67 midway through the third. Okogie had 16 points and sparked the Timberwolves to retake the lead with an 18-2 run. The rookie had a breakaway dunk and a 3-pointer to give Minnesota a 77-74 lead, but he brought some of the biggest cheers of the night with an emphatic block on Harden's 3-point attempt with 3:40 to play.

After being stripped by Okogie a few plays earlier, Harden stepped back again behind the arc to attempt the 3. This time, the ball didn't even leave his hand before Okogie leaped forward and stuffed it, bringing the crowd to its feet.

NETS 148, CAVALIERS 139, 3OT

CLEVELAND (AP) — D'Angelo Russell scored 14 of his 36 points in the third overtime and Brooklyn outlasted Cleveland.

DeMarre Carroll's desperation 3-pointer at the buzzer of the second overtime tied the game, and Nets carried the momentum into the third extra session.

Russell, who is headed to play in his first All-Star Game, had two points in the first half and scored Brooklyn's first 11 points in third overtime, including two 3-pointers.

Joe Harris scored 25 points and Carroll had 18 as the Nets improved to 30-29 — above .500 at the All-Star break for the first time since 2012-13.

Jordan Clarkson scored a career-high 42 points for Cleveland. Collin Sexton had 24 points and Marquese Chriss added 23.

TRAIL BLAZERS 129, WARRIORS 107

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Damian Lillard scored 29 points and Portland snapped Golden State's five-game winning streak with a chippy victory that included the late ejection of Warriors coach Steve Kerr.

Jake Layman added 17 points off the bench for the Blazers, who had eight players in double figures. The win snapped a two-game skid.

Kevin Durant and Stephen Curry each had 32 points for the Warriors, who rested DeMarcus Cousins following a victory at home over Utah the night before.

Portland led 110-103 before Golden State's Draymond Green was called for a flagrant foul on Zach Collins

with 3:54 left. Kerr reacted angrily, throwing his clipboard to court and yelling at the officials before he was ejected.

RAPTORS 129, WIZARDS 120

TORONTO (AP) — Pascal Siakam scored a career-high 44 points and grabbed 10 rebounds, OG Anunoby scored a career-best 22 points, and Toronto beat Washington for its sixth straight win.

Serge Ibaka had 10 points and 13 rebounds, and Kyle Lowry had 14 points and 13 assists as the Raptors used a big third quarter to overcome a 12-point deficit and post their fifth straight victory over the struggling Wizards. Jeremy Lin played 25 minutes in his Toronto debut after signing earlier in the day. He was recently waived by the Atlanta Hawks.

Toronto won without All-Star Kawhi Leonard, who sat for the second time in four games because of a sore left knee. Leonard also missed last Thursday's win at Atlanta. Coach Nick Nurse said he wouldn't mind if Leonard played in Sunday's All-Star Game in Charlotte. Bradley Beal scored 28 points, Jeff Green had 23 and Jabari Parker 22 as Washington lost for the fifth time in seven games.

NUGGETS 120, KINGS 118

DENVER (AP) — Nikola Jokic tipped in a basket with less than a second remaining, Isaiah Thomas hit two big 3-pointers in his long-awaited Denver debut and the Nuggets held



Houston Rockets' James Harden, left, shoots as Minnesota Timberwolves' Luol Deng defends in the second half of an NBA basketball game, Wednesday, Feb. 13, 2019, in Minneapolis.

Associated Press

off Sacramento.

Jokic finished with 20 points, 18 rebounds and 11 assists for his 28th career triple-double, and Paul Millsap matched a season high with 25 points as Denver overcame a 17-point first-half deficit.

Down six late, the Kings tied it on Buddy Hield's layup with 15.1 seconds. After a timeout, Jokic went to work down low, missing his first shot attempt before tipping it in. Hield's last-gasp 3-pointer was off the mark at the buzzer.

Thomas proclaimed his surgically repaired hip good to go prior to the game

and was anxious to step back onto the court. He received a standing ovation when he entered the game late in the first quarter.

76ERS 126, KNICKS 111

NEW YORK (AP) — Joel Embiid had 26 points, 14 rebounds and one flying leap over an award-winning actress into the crowd, and Philadelphia handed New York its 18th straight loss.

Tobias Harris scored 25 points and Ben Simmons had 18 for the 76ers, who bounced back from their 112-109 home loss to Boston on Tuesday, sending themselves into the All-Star break with a 37-21 record. □

Ducks top Canucks 1-0 in Murray's debut to end losing streak

By DAN GREENSPAN

ANAHEIM, Calif. (AP) — A fresh start was exactly what the Anaheim Ducks needed.

Kevin Boyle made 35 saves in his first career start and the Ducks beat the Vancouver Canucks 1-0 Wednesday night in general manager Bob Murray's first game as interim coach. Jakob Silfverberg scored to help Anaheim end a seven-game losing streak, a skid which prompted Murray to fire coach Randy Carlyle on Sunday and take over for the rest of the season.

The 64-year-old Murray had never coached professionally at any level but got the response he had been looking for, with Silfverberg scoring 6:30 into the first period to give the Ducks their first lead since getting the opening goal in a 5-1 loss at St. Louis on Jan. 23.

"If you look at it, it wasn't a clean game from us," Silfverberg said. "We can always improve, but at

the same time we'll take a win however it looks right now. Hopefully this will get a huge load off our back and we can start building off this."

Anaheim didn't offer much aesthetically, generating one shot during three power-play opportunities and often struggling to cleanly get the puck out of its own zone. But the Ducks did play with a feisty edge throughout the increasingly chippy game, showing the emotion and pushback Murray believed had been lacking as they dropped 19 of their previous 21 games to plummet into last place in the Western Conference. Veteran forward Ryan Kesler got into a fight with Josh Leivo less than two minutes after Silfverberg scored, and Ducks captain Ryan Getzlaf scrapped with Erik Gudbranson in the second period.

Silfverberg felt the Ducks channeled that passion in the right way to earn their



Anaheim Ducks goaltender Kevin Boyle, left, deflects the puck as teammate Josh Manson and Vancouver Canucks' Bo Horvat watch during the third period of an NHL hockey game Wednesday, Feb. 13, 2019, in Anaheim, Calif. The Ducks won 1-0.

Associated Press

first victory since a road win over New Jersey on Jan. 19. "Emotion is something we've been kind of missing, but at the same time you got to do it the right way," Silfverberg said. "You can't just go out there and try to look to run guys over cause then you're going to be spending the rest of the game in the penalty box and you're not going to have any fun."

Murray certainly seemed to be making the most of his unexpected time on the bench, offering a sheepish grin when he was shown on camera to start the game. Despite delegating tasks such as line changes to assistants Mark Morrison and Marty Wilford, Murray admitted the game was much faster from his new vantage point after years of watching from up high.

"I always told you it's very easy upstairs, but it was good," Murray said. "I enjoyed being around the guys and, again, tonight everything was positive so it was easier."

It helped that Murray had the benefit of Boyle, a 26-year-old undrafted rookie, joining John Gibson as the second Ducks goalie to record a shutout in his first NHL start. □

Koivu 'totally confident' in return from ACL surgery

By DAVE CAMPBELL

AP Sports Writer

Leaning on his crutches, just six days after reconstructive surgery on his right knee, Mikko Koivu was asked if he had concern about his ability to return to the Minnesota Wild next season at age 36.

Just as if he were corralling a puck with a quick flick of his stick on a faceoff, Koivu didn't flinch.

"Yes, I'm totally confident. I think those are just numbers," Koivu said. "I think it's about your effort, the way you take care of yourself on and off the ice, and at the end, it's going to be a battle. But if you're strong enough, you're going to be able to do it."

Koivu's determination and

strength has never been in doubt, but the torn anterior cruciate ligament and meniscus cartilage he suffered in a game at Buffalo on Feb. 5 has raised a question about the Wild captain's future considering this major late-career injury. Koivu will enter the final year of his contract this summer, with a \$5.5 million charge against the salary cap.

Factoring in the typical ACL recovery timetable, the chance is slim that Koivu will be ready to join his teammates for on-ice drills at the start of training camp.

"I think it's too early to talk about it too much, but that's definitely my goal," Koivu said Thursday after the Wild's practice, his first public comments since the

collision with Sabres forward Tage Thompson.

Receiving medical clearance for the 2019-20 season opener will be an additionally hefty challenge, but Koivu, who was drafted sixth overall in 2001 by the Wild out of Finland and has topped the franchise leaderboards in several statistical categories over his 14-year career, cast his familiar steely gaze toward the daunting rehabilitation that's ahead.

"It's a fact that this knee will be stronger than I've ever experienced," Koivu said. "The rest of it is up to me." The Wild are just 1-4-2 this month and 1-3 without Koivu, currently clinging to the eighth and final post-season spot in the Western



In this Jan. 23, 2019, file photo, Minnesota Wild center Mikko Koivu questions a call with a referee in the second period of an NHL hockey game against the Colorado Avalanche, in Denver.

Associated Press

Conference. They host the New Jersey Devils on Friday night, the only team they've beaten in February. "We're going to make the playoffs. That's about as elaborate as I'm going to get," coach Bruce Boudreau said. "You want me to predict how many wins we're going to have? Not going to happen. But we're going to make the playoffs."

Joel Eriksson Ek has been a productive fill-in over the last four games, but Koivu's absence requires more than simply replacing a second-line center.

"In the locker room, outside the locker room. The little things of playing against every team's top center, every faceoff that's important, every time you need something," Boudreau said. □

DAYTON 500

Continued from Page 17

A year later, Richard Petty Motorsports is still a mid-pack team scrambling for sponsorship and battling financial woes that have put the future of the organization and Wallace's ride on the rocks.

How about a repeat finish at Daytona? Even the 25-year-old Wallace isn't convinced it's in the cards. "A lot of people hyped this story up coming back as, 'oh, you are going to do it again.' It's like, let's pump the brakes," Wallace said. "Let's get through the rest of the week and let's make it to lap 199."

Dillon and Wallace finished 1-2 in the kind of finish NASCAR was banking on as the genesis of a breakthrough season for its youth movement. Dillon put the No. 3 car made famous by Dale Earnhardt back in victory lane. He met a kid who gave Dillon a lucky penny that the driver taped to the dashboard. Wallace took a phone call from Hank Aaron and rekindled glory days with Petty. He starred in a docu-series on Facebook Watch and the driver who has tried to build his brand on social media had fans flocking to him for selfies.

They were young, raced with iconic car numbers, and had enough social media savvy that could potentially attract Generation Z to a sport in dire need of a lift.

That 1-2 punch morphed into a season-long punch in the gut.

The buzz of his biggest win sent Dillon to "Live with Kelly and Ryan," put him on a podcast with Shaq and, this week, he toured Disney World in a surprise visit with the 12-year-old boy who had that penny.

His post-Daytona results were chump change.

Dillon was caught up in the Chevrolet malaise as series drivers struggled in the first year of the Camaro. And Richard Childress Racing, which celebrates its 50th anniversary this season, has slipped to a second-tier team unable to consistently compete with NASCAR's heavyweights. There was no Daytona 500 shine — Dillon had just one oth-



Austin Dillon, center, talks with reporters during the NASCAR Daytona 500 auto racing media day at Daytona International Speedway, Wednesday, Feb. 13, 2019, in Daytona Beach, Fla. Associated Press

er top-five finish and was knocked out of the playoffs in the first round. He finished 13th in the standings.

"I think I'll just respond differently now if I won it again, trying to stay on it each and every week," Dillon said. "But you've still got to have the car capable of doing it and the speed out there each week to finish where you would like to finish, and that's first."

"The Great American Race" is sprinkled with winners who never again achieved the heights set on their greatest day. Trevor Bayne. Derrike Cope. Pete Hamilton. Ward Burton. Dillon would rather become the fourth driver to win consecutive Daytona 500s. Petty (1973-1974) and Cale Yarborough (1983-1984) both won two straight Daytona 500s, and no driver has had his name etched on the Harley J. Earl Trophy two straight years since Sterling Marlin (1994-95).

"It seems like a hard thing to do," Dillon said. "This place is not easy to win at. That's why it's so special, and so many people haven't won here." Wallace's season unraveled almost as soon as the last piece of confetti was swept at Daytona. He failed to post another top-five finish and finished a woeful 28th in the standings in the No. 43 Chevy.

His rotation of sponsors were straight out of a late-night infomercial, with at least a dozen (Pioneer Records Management, Mile 22) on the hood of the 43. Wallace has headphone company AfterShokz as his primary sponsor in Sunday's race.

Dillon and Wallace each have new crew chiefs for 2019. RPM promoted lead engineer Derek Stamets to replace Drew Blickensderfer and RCR had Danny Stockman replace Justin Alexander on the pit box.

Dillon wasn't much of a factor in last year's race until the final lap in overtime when he got a push from Wallace that nudged him closer to leader Aric Almirola. Dillon spun Almirola, then zipped to the lead to win a race, a trophy and eventually some lessons learned on how to handle the magnitude of NASCAR's marquee weekend.

"It was definitely hard being a first time winner last year and juggling everything that comes along with it, but I would never throw that away," Dillon said. "It's a championship in itself winning here, so it feels pretty dang good. But you've got to refocus at some point, and I think our team put together a really good championship effort in the final 10 races." □



In this Sunday Feb. 3, 2019 photo provided by SailGP, SailGP USA Team, left and SailGP Australia Team practice side by side in Sydney.

Associated Press

High-tech SailGP series hits the water on Sydney Harbour

SYDNEY (AP) — Boats skippered by Australian Olympic gold medalists Nathan Outteridge and Tom Slingby are among the favorites in the inaugural SailGP races starting on Sydney Harbour on Friday.

A fleet of six super-charged F50 catamarans capable of reaching speeds up to 90 kilometers per hour (55 mph) will represent different nations in the two-day, six-race event, with Slingby leading the Australian boat and Outteridge the Japanese entry.

"Nathan is the favorite but I'm confident in our team and I think we can beat him if we do our job," Slingby said Thursday.

SailGP is the sailing league founded by tech billionaire Larry Ellison and five-time America's Cup winner Russell Coutts. It features many of the world's top sailors racing 50-foot, wing-sailed catamarans that fly across the top of waves on hydrofoils. Teams will compete at five tour stops, with the finale being a winner-take-all, \$1 million match race between the top two teams to crown the 2019 champion.

Unlike in the America's Cup, all the boats are identical. Crews won't be allowed to make changes without approval of the measurement

team.

The boats will meet in five races in Sydney with the two highest-scoring boats facing off against each other in Saturday afternoon's final.

"I love how everyone keeps saying we were the favorites, all of the guys up here have got incredible talent," Outteridge said at the skipper's media conference on Thursday.

New Zealander Phil Robertson, skipper of the Chinese entry, said no one is sure what to expect.

"It's a pretty daunting thought, to be honest, lining up on Sydney Harbour for the first time with six boats going at the speeds that these boats do," Robertson said. The other three teams will be skippered by nationals: Britain by 49er class world champion Dylan Fletcher, France by Nacra 17 world champion Billy Besson and the United States by Rome Kirby of Newport, Rhode Island, who also sailed with Oracle Team USA in the 2013 America's Cup. After Sydney, the tour stops in San Francisco on May 4-5; New York on June 21-22; Cowes, England, on Aug. 10-11; and Marseille, France, on Sept. 20-22 for the finale that will include the winner-take-all \$1 million match race. □

Semenya appeal case mixes science, sports, gender politics

By GRAHAM DUNBAR

AP Sports Writer

GENEVA (AP) — Caster Semenya's running future will be decided by three judges starting next week in a landmark case that will challenge science and gender politics.

The two-time Olympic 800-meter champion from South Africa is looking to overturn eligibility rules for hyperandrogenic athletes proposed by track and field's governing body. The IAAF wants to require women with naturally elevated testosterone to lower their levels by medication before being allowed to compete in world-class races from 400 meters to one mile.

"She looks forward to responding to the IAAF at the upcoming hearing," Semenya's lawyers in Johannesburg, Norton Rose Fulbright, said Thursday in a statement. "She asks that she be respected and treated as any other athlete: Her genetic gift should be celebrated, not discriminated against."

A scheduled five-day appeal case starting Monday is among the longest ever heard by the Court of Arbitration for Sport. The verdict, expected next month, could also be among the most ethically controversial in the sports court's 35-year history.

The panel of three CAS judges could decide based only on science: Can the IAAF prove women with



In this file photo dated Sunday, Sept. 9, 2018, Caster Semenya of South Africa crosses the finish line to win the women's 800 meters for Africa, at the IAAF track and field Continental Cup in Ostrava, Czech Republic.

Associated Press

Differences of Sexual Development (DSD) get a significant performance advantage from male levels of testosterone.

The IAAF insists no woman is being reclassified as male, and it "makes no judgment about gender or sexual identity."

"(The rules) are about levelling the playing field to ensure fair and meaningful competition in the sport of athletics where success is determined by talent, dedication and hard work rather than other contributing factors," IAAF president Sebastian Coe said last year. Still, Semenya's case has been championed by United Nations human rights

experts and women's sport activists, led by Billie Jean King, who see potential abuse and discrimination in the track federation's proposal.

As for the science, lawyers for Semenya will call expert witnesses from the United States and her native South Africa to discredit the IAAF's research. The evidence could help deliver a second loss for the IAAF at CAS on an issue that has flared for a decade and cast a shadow on Semenya's career.

In 2009, the 18-year-old prodigy won her first world championship title in the 800 meters, finishing in 1 minute, 55.45 seconds to

become the third fastest woman this century. Hours before the race in Berlin, it emerged that the IAAF had asked for Semenya to undergo a gender verification test.

The IAAF introduced Hyperandrogenism Regulations in 2011 to replace the gender policy with guidance limiting women to serum levels of natural testosterone below 10 nanomoles per liter of blood. Semenya then finished second in the 800 at the 2012 London Olympics in 1:57.23, but was later upgraded to gold after the original winner was disqualified for doping.

The IAAF's regulations were later blocked by Indian

sprinter Dutee Chand, who won a CAS verdict in 2015. Three judges, including Canadian professor Richard McLaren, said the IAAF did not prove hyperandrogenic women gained a significant advantage, and invited the governing body to submit new evidence.

While the rules were suspended, Semenya won a second Olympic title at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Games in 1:55.28 — more than four seconds faster than her best times in the previous two seasons.

The IAAF published its research in a British medical journal in 2017, using data from athletes at the 2011 and 2013 world championships.

It claimed 7.1 in every 1,000 elite female athletes had elevated testosterone levels, 140 times higher than the general population. This helped give a supposed performance advantage of 1.8 to 4.5 percent in events from 400 to 1,500 meters.

The proposed solution was requiring women to medicate — likely with contraceptive pills — to bring testosterone levels below 5 nmol/L for at least six months before competing at elite events such as the Olympics, world championships or Diamond League meets.

"No athlete will be forced to undergo surgery," said IAAF medical adviser Stephane Bermon, who co-wrote the research. □

MLS extends commissioner Garber's contract through 2023

NEW YORK (AP) — Major League Soccer Commissioner Don Garber's contract has been extended by league owners for five years through 2023.

Garber's previous contract expired at the end of 2018. He was hired in August 1999 to succeed Doug Logan, MLS's first commissioner.

Garber, 61, spent 15 years with the NFL. He was senior

vice president of its international division when he was recruited for MLS by Robert Kraft and Lamar Hunt, owners of teams in both leagues. Garber was inducted into the U.S. National Soccer Hall of Fame last year.

Under his leadership, MLS has more than doubled in size from 12 to 27 teams and helped develop a boom in soccer stadium

construction in the U.S. and Canada. MLS teams have 20 soccer specific stadiums, up from just the one in Columbus, Ohio, when Garber joined MLS, and Minnesota's Allianz Field opens this year.

Additional stadiums are planned for Austin, Texas; Cincinnati; Columbus; Miami; and Nashville, Tennessee. Garber's new deal was announced Thursday. □



In this Jan. 15, 2019, file photo, Major League Soccer Commissioner Don Garber announces that Austin will be an expansion franchise for the 2021 season, in Austin, Texas.

Associated Press



This Tuesday, July 19, 2016, file photo shows the Google logo at the company's headquarters in Mountain View, Calif.
Associated Press

Google to invest \$13 billion in new U.S. offices, data centers

By **RACHEL LERMAN**
AP Technology Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Google plans to invest more than \$13 billion this year on new and expanded data centers and offices across the U.S.

CEO Sundar Pichai announced the news in a blog post Wednesday, emphasizing the company's growth outside its Mountain View, California, home and across the Midwest and South.

"2019 marks the second year in a row we'll be growing faster outside of the (San Francisco) Bay Area than in it," he wrote.

Google will build new data centers in Nevada, Texas, Oklahoma, Nebraska, Ohio, South Carolina and Virginia. Pichai estimated

the construction of the new centers will employ 10,000 workers.

It makes good political sense for Google to highlight its expansions outside coastal cities, said CFRA Research analyst Scott Kesler. U.S. legislators have paid increasing attention to Google and other big tech companies in the past year, and are considering passing privacy laws to regulate the companies' reach. Investing more widely across the U.S. could help it curry favor with federal politicians and officials, he said.

Google is focused on expanding its cloud-computing business, a market where it faces stiff competition from larger rivals Amazon and Microsoft. □

Vatican, Microsoft team up on artificial intelligence ethics

VATICAN CITY (AP) — The Vatican says it is teaming up with Microsoft on an academic prize to promote ethics in artificial intelligence.

Pope Francis met privately on Wednesday with Microsoft President Brad Smith and the head of a Vatican scientific office that promotes Catholic Church positions on human life.

The Vatican said Smith and Archbishop Vincenzo Paglia of the Pontifical Academy for Life told Francis about the international prize for an individual who has successfully defended a dissertation on ethical issues involving artificial intelligence. The winner will receive 6,000 euros (\$6,900) and an invitation to Microsoft's Seattle headquarters.



People walk into the lobby for Amazon offices Thursday, Feb. 14, 2019, in New York

Associated Press

Amazon dumps NYC headquarters and its promised 25,000 jobs

By **JOSEPH PISANI** and **ALEXANDRA OLSON**
AP Business Writers

NEW YORK (AP) — Amazon abruptly dropped plans Thursday for a big new headquarters in New York that would have brought 25,000 jobs to the city, reversing course after politicians and activists objected to the nearly \$3 billion in tax breaks promised to what is already one of the world's richest, most powerful companies.

"We are disappointed to have reached this conclusion — we love New York," the online giant from Seattle said in a blog post announcing its withdrawal.

The stunning move was a serious blow to Gov. Andrew Cuomo and Mayor Bill de Blasio, who had lobbied intensely to land the project, competing against more than 200 other metropolitan areas across the continent that were practically tripping over each other to offer incentives to Amazon in a bidding war the company stoked.

Cuomo lashed out at fellow New York politicians over Amazon's change of heart, saying the project would have helped diversify the city's economy, cement its status as an emerging tech hub and generate money for schools, housing and

transit.

"A small group of politicians put their own narrow political interests above their community," he said.

But Democratic Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, New York City's new liberal firebrand, exulted over Amazon's pullout.

"Today was the day a group of dedicated, everyday New Yorkers and their neighbors defeated Amazon's corporate greed, its worker exploitation, and the power of the richest man in the world," she tweeted, referring to Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos.

The swift unraveling of the project reflected growing antipathy toward large technology companies among liberals and populists who accuse big business of holding down wages and wielding too much political clout, analysts said.

"This all of a sudden became a perfect test case for all those arguments," said Joe Parilla, a fellow at the Brookings Institution's Metropolitan Policy Project. Amazon ultimately decided it did not want to be drawn into that battle.

Amazon announced in November that it had chosen the Long Island City section of Queens for one of two new headquarters, with the other in Arlington, Virginia.

Both would get 25,000 jobs.

A third site in Nashville, Tennessee, would get 5,000.

The company planned to spend \$2.5 billion building the New York office, choosing the area in part because of its large pool of tech talent.

The governor and the mayor had argued that the project would spur economic growth that would pay for the \$2.8 billion in state and city incentives many times over.

After Amazon backed out, the mayor criticized it for not doing more to try to win over New Yorkers, saying: "You have to be tough to make it in New York City."

In pulling out, Amazon said it isn't looking for a replacement location "at this time." It said it plans to spread the technology jobs that were slated for New York to other offices around the U.S. and Canada, including Chicago, Toronto and Austin, Texas. It will also expand its existing New York offices, which already have about 5,000 employees.

Amazon faced fierce opposition over the tax breaks, with critics complaining that the project was an extravagant giveaway — or worse, a shakedown — and that it wouldn't provide much direct benefit to most New Yorkers. □

Report finds problems with student loan servicing, oversight

By KEN SWEET

NEW YORK (AP) — The nine companies and organizations tasked with servicing the accounts of the nation's 30 million student loan borrowers repeatedly failed to do their jobs properly over a period of years and their regulator neglected to hold them responsible, a new report finds.

The report released Thursday by the Department of Education's independent inspector general's office shows some borrowers weren't getting the guidance and protection they needed as they sought the best plan for paying off their student loans. The nation's student loan debt now stands at \$1.5 trillion.

The Inspector General's report focused on the operations of Federal Student Aid, a part of the Department of Education that oversees student loans, from January 2015 to September 2017. FSA also oversees student loan servicers, making sure they are in compliance with their contracts with the federal government.



In this Oct. 23, 2018, file photo, students walk on the campus of Miami Dade College, in Miami.

Associated Press

The report found, in many cases, FSA was not holding student loan servicers accountable when they failed to follow the rules. For example, the report says FSA found a problem at a student loan servicer six out of 10 times the regulator did a formal observation, with

some servicers having the same issue repeatedly. Instead of ordering changes at the servicers, FSA often let the company off with a slap on the wrist.

"In most cases ... FSA did not take actions stronger than correcting the accounts of those affected (and) rarely

did the FSA require the servicer to conduct a full file review," the report said. "FSA also rarely penalizes servicers for recurring non-compliance."

In its response to the inspector general, the FSA disagreed with the report's conclusions but agreed to

follow its recommendations for improving oversight.

The Department of Education did not immediately have a response to the Inspector General's report.

The federal government does not manage student loans on its own. FSA outsources student loan accounts to a handful of private companies and state-run loan authorities. Navient, Great Lakes Educational Loan Services, Nelnet Servicing and the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency are the largest. The companies are paid a monthly fee per account and are responsible for making sure borrowers pay on time, and that the borrower is in the correct repayment plan.

In its report, the inspector general highlighted two recurring problems in particular: Loan servicer representatives failed to inform borrowers of all their repayment options and they miscalculated a borrower's monthly payments under certain types of repayment plans. □

US wholesale prices dip 0.1 percent in January

By MARTIN CRUTSINGER

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. wholesale prices fell for a second straight month in January as energy costs fell sharply again. The monthly declines were more evidence that inflation remains under control.

The Labor Department said Thursday that producer prices, which track changes before they reach the consumer, dipped 0.1 percent in January, matching the 0.1 percent December decline. In both months energy prices fell sharply, dropping 3.8 percent last month after a decline of 4.3 percent in December. Energy prices began falling in November with a 5.1 percent drop.

Over the past 12 months, wholesale prices have risen just 2 percent. That's the smallest 12-month change since July 2017. Core wholesale prices, which subtract

volatile food and energy, were up 2.6 percent over the past 12 months.

The government reported Wednesday that consumer prices were unchanged in January and are up only 1.6 percent over the past 12 months.

The Federal Reserve last month held its key interest rate steady after boosting it four times in 2018. The Fed said it would be "patient" in deciding to hike rates this year, a signal that investors saw as indicating the central bank planned to remain on hold for a number of months as it assessed the impact its previous hikes were having on the economy. The Fed has room to keep rates steady because inflation pressures are absent.

The report on wholesale prices showed that the 3.8 percent drop in energy costs reflected a 7.3 percent decline in gaso-



In this Aug. 24, 2018, file photo, worker rakes wild blueberries at farm in Union, Maine.

Associated Press





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line prices and the biggest drop in diesel fuel since December 2015.

Food costs at the wholesale level fell 1.7 percent in January, reflecting big declines in the price of eggs, vegetables and fruit. □



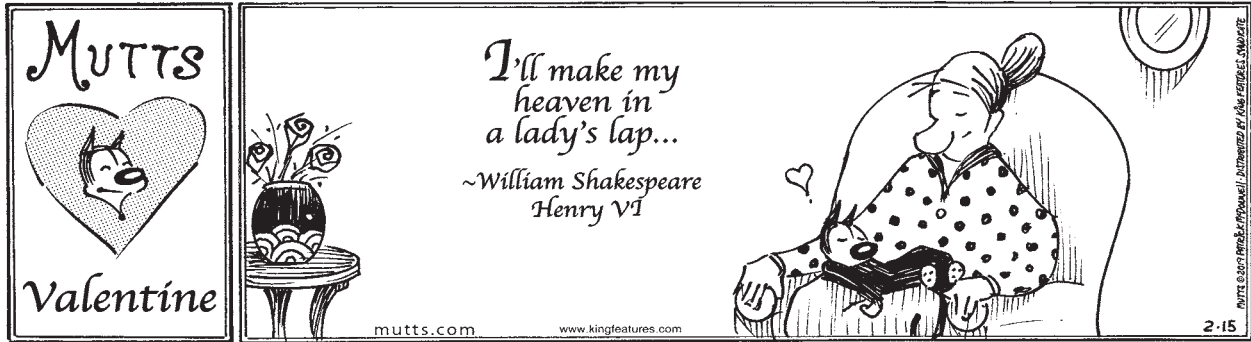
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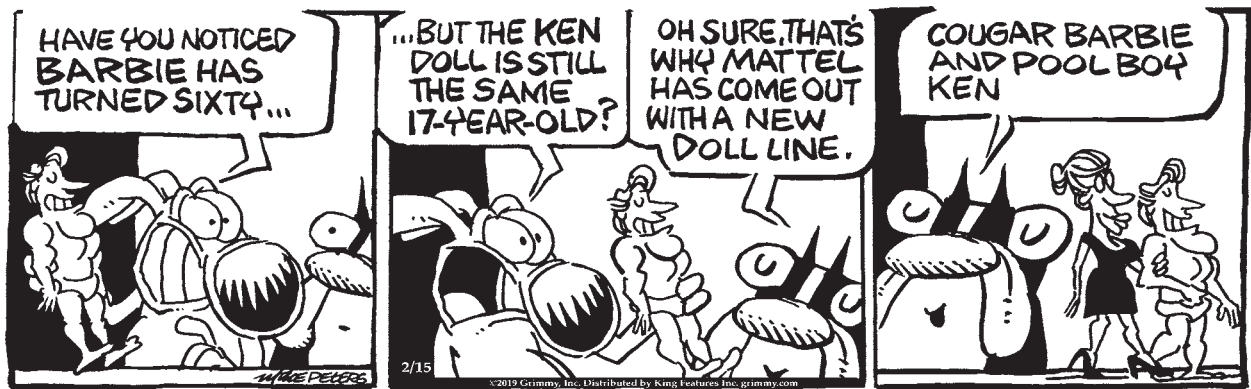
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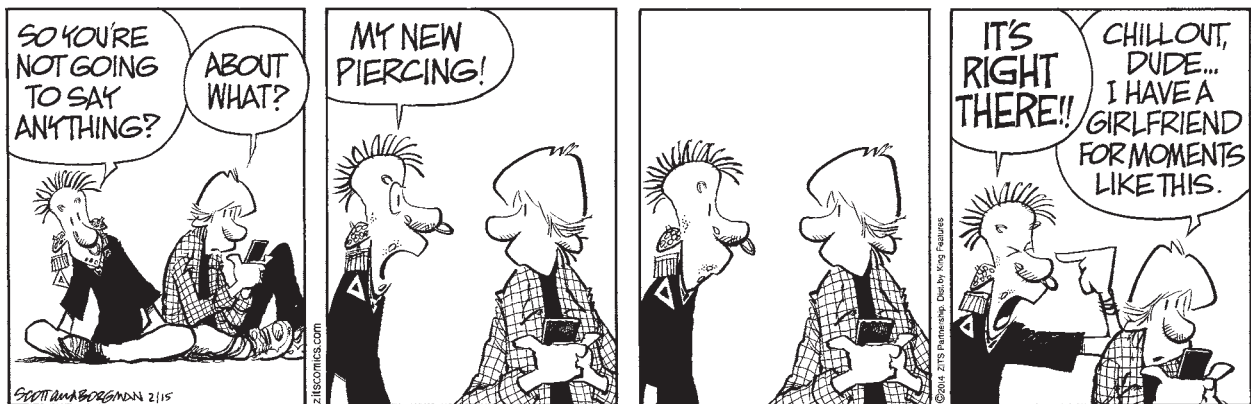
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Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

	7					2	
2			7		1		9
		8				5	
	1		8		3		6
	8		6		4		7
		2				8	
6			9		7		5
	4					3	

Difficulty Level ★★★★★

2/15

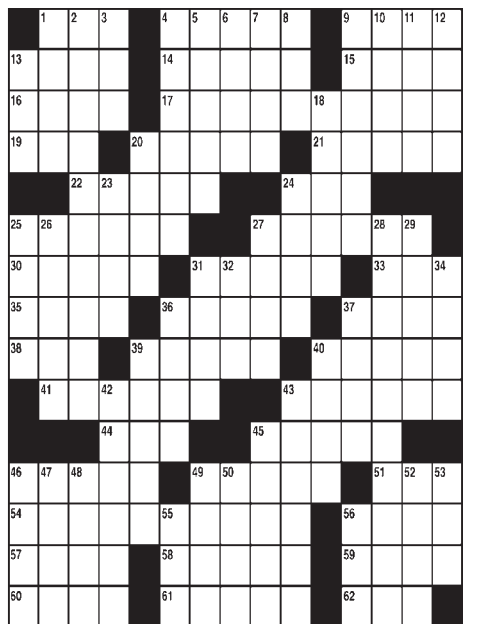
Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

2	5	9	3	4	7	6	8	1
1	6	4	9	8	5	2	7	3
3	7	8	6	1	2	4	5	9
6	2	5	4	9	8	1	3	7
9	8	3	7	6	1	5	4	2
4	1	7	5	2	3	8	9	6
5	3	1	8	7	6	9	2	4
7	9	2	1	5	4	3	6	8
8	4	6	2	3	9	7	1	5

ACROSS

- 1 In a rage
4 German cars
9 Canyon sound
13 Reasonable bedtime
14 Bear the ____; assume most of the burden
15 "High ____"; Gary Cooper classic
16 Cave dwellers
17 Nervous wreck
19 Series for Ted Danson, once
20 Cowboy hat fabrics
21 Acting parts
22 Ill-tempered
24 Not up to ____; substandard
25 Loathsome
27 Most pleasant
30 Neighbor of India
31 ____ out; protrude
33 Stylish
35 ____ in; wearing
36 Smidgen
37 Explorer Marco
38 Dine
39 Baseball's Jeter
40 Smooth and glossy
41 Once every 12 months
43 Cool dessert
44 Actress Harper, to friends
45 Armed robbery
46 Parody
49 "Seek and ye ____ find..."
51 Record speed letters
54 Entrepreneur
56 One not to be trusted
57 Copied
58 One's strong point
59 Traveler's stops
60 "A ____ home is his castle"
61 Rough woolen fabric
62 ____ McMuffin; fast-food breakfast
- DOWN
- 1 Farrow & Kirshner
2 See coming
3 ____ Moines
4 Mother Superior
5 Mountains in Russia
6 Do a household chore
7 Printer owner's purchases
8 Sault ____, Marie
9 Audience's demand
10 Fuel, for some
11 Nylons
12 Small numbers
13 CBS rival
18 Train rails
20 Umpire's cry
23 "Abbey ____", Beatles album
24 Choose
25 ____ in Love with Amy
26 Procrastinate
27 Actor Nolte
28 On a ____; with little money
29 Flooring squares
31 Nimble
32 Casual shirt, for short
34 Jab



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

2/15/19

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

SNIT	JONAH	HAFT
NONE	EMOTE	OGRE
ONCE	WIDESPREAD	
BOO	VETS	ANDYS
HEELS	HIE	
SPEARS	PENTUP	
TARRY	STOAT	NAB
ALES	SHEER	BETA
BEN	GLEAM	BOXER
STARED	ELAPSE	
ROW	HAUTE	
IGLOO	DATE	CBS
TRAUMATIZE	STEP	
CANS	RACER	HERR
HYDE	KEELS	EDGY

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2/15/19

- 36 Peddle
37 Two ____ two is four
39 Breeze in a room
40 Dirt
42 Steers clear of
43 Liquefied
45 ____ makes waste
- 46 Crooked deal
47 Family member
48 Unlock
49 Difficult to teach
50 Bring on board
52 Spasm of pain
53 Sra. or Mme.
55 Toward a ship's stern
56 Recline

Sheriff: Dog named Donald Trump wasn't killed over politics

By AMANDA SEITZ
Associated Press

A Minnesota sheriff says a dog named Donald Trump wasn't shot and killed over a political rivalry, despite false claims circulating on social media that have spurred "violent threats" against some county residents.

The Jackson County Sheriff's Office concluded the person who shot Donald Trump the dog Sunday was "legally protecting their livestock" on private property. The shooter has not been identified.

"Facts have been misrepresented on social media sites," Sheriff Shawn Haken's office said in a statement about the dog's death. "Unfortunately, people are now posting multiple threats of violence towards citizens in the area and justifying the threats based on these inaccurate posts on social media." The dog's owner, 59-year-old Randal Thom of Lakefield, is an avid supporter of the president who has attended 46 of his rallies. Trump signed Thom's photo of the dog at one of the rallies. □

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Cleaning routine shows promise in curbing superbug infection

By MARILYNN MARCHIONE
AP Chief Medical Writer

Think of it as decontaminating yourself. Hospitalized patients who harbor certain superbugs can cut their risk of developing full-blown infections if they swab medicated goo in their nose and use special soap and mouthwash for six months after going home, a study found.

It's a low-tech approach to a big problem: About 5 percent of patients have MRSA — antibiotic-resistant Staph bacteria — lurking on their skin or in their noses, putting them at high risk of developing an infection while recovering from an illness or an operation. These can affect the skin, heart, brain, lungs, bones and joints, and most of them land people back in the hospital.

The hygiene steps that researchers tested trimmed that risk by nearly one third. "It's a very simple solution. You don't have to swallow a medicine, you just have to clean the outside of your



In this Monday, Feb. 11, 2019 photo provided by Dr. Susan Huang of the University of California, Irvine School of Medicine, researcher Raheeb Saavedra demonstrates how to use a medicated ointment for a study on preventing superbug infections.

Associated Press

and an antibiotic ointment to swab in the nose. They were told to use these Monday through Friday, every other week for six months.

A year later, 6 percent of those in the deep-clean group had developed a MRSA infection versus 9 percent of the others. They also had fewer infections from other germs. Doctors estimated that 25 to 30 people would need to be treated to prevent one case.

There were no serious side effects; 44 people had dry or irritated skin, and most continued using the products despite that.

Heather Avizius was one. The 41-year-old nanny has had MRSA infections in the past and entered the study after severe complications of Crohn's disease landed her in St. Jude Medical Center in Fullerton, California, eight years ago.

"I took the regimen very, very seriously" and has not had MRSA since, she said. "I felt cleaner and safer" and less worried about spreading germs to her children, she said.

Nearly half dropped out of the study early or couldn't be found for follow-up.

"Many people may think 'I feel fine, I don't really need to do this,'" said Dr. John Jernigan of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. But "the risk doesn't end once you go home."

Federal grants paid for the products. They would cost \$150 to \$200 for six months otherwise, Huang said. The antiseptic soap was a 4 percent chlorhexidine solution sold in many drug stores.

Other soaps, even ones labeled antibacterial, "may not have the active ingredients to remove MRSA," said Dr. Robert Weinstein, another study leader and an infections specialist at Cook County Health and Rush University Medical Center in Chicago.

It's worth it for patients to do whatever they can to prevent an MRSA infection, he said.

"You left the hospital, you don't want to go back."

□

El Nino is back but it's late, weak and probably no big deal

WASHINGTON (AP) — An El Nino, which can alter weather worldwide, has formed but it's so weak and late that it shouldn't be a big deal, U.S. forecasters said.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration announced Thursday that the climate feature formed in the central Pacific, but forecasters don't expect it to last more than three or four months.

An El Nino is a natural warming of the ocean that once it interacts with the atmo-

sphere often warms up the globe and changes rainfall and temperature patterns, making some places wetter and some places drier. When there is an El Nino, there are generally fewer and weaker hurricanes in the Atlantic, but this one might not make it to summer and have any effect on the next storm season, said Mike Halpert, deputy director for the NOAA's Climate Prediction Center.

A wintertime El Nino often means more rain for the U.S. South and Southern

California, but this is late in the season and it's already rainy there, Halpert said.

The current El Nino is quite different than the last one in 2016, which was one of the strongest meteorologists have seen and helped push Earth to its warmest year on record.

This year's version is "kind of limping along," Halpert said. So he and other scientists said they don't expect many significant effects.

Forecasters had been waiting for it since last June when NOAA issued its first El Nino watch. But while the water was warmer than normal in the Pacific, it wasn't causing the changes in the air that would satisfy the definition for El Nino. During stronger past El Ninos, the U.S. economy has benefited because of less drought and fewer hurricanes, economic studies show. □

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Michael Kors throws a '70s bash with Barry Manilow on stage

By LEANNE ITALIE
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Michael Kors threw a fashion show worthy of Studio 54 with Barry Manilow belting "Copacabana" on a glittery stage and rock muse Patti Hansen walking the runway Wednesday.

His crowd, seated inside a Wall Street ballroom, went wild for both on the closing day of New York Fashion Week as he rolled out shaggy coats and feather boas, sparkly gowns in neon purple and electric blue, and flirty ruffles on dresses and skirts, all worthy of the heady '70s.

Sisters Bella and Gigi Hadid took to the catwalk to help move the bash along, but the surprise of Manilow's performance had the crowd on its feet. The 75-year-old legend is still going strong, proudly showing off his orange bedazzled "Copa" jacket backstage after the upbeat show.

It's just what the fashion crowd needed on the eighth day of racing from show to show during fashion



Designer Michael Kors, center, is joined by model Patti Hansen and Barry Manilow on stage after his collection was modeled during Fashion Week in New York, Wednesday, Feb. 13, 2019.

Associated Press

week, and the day after an icy snowstorm made that even more challenging.

Kors fall collection celebrated the city's melting pot of style and the kings and queens of the era: Bette, Bianca and Baryshnikov among them. The designer's impeccable tailoring and eye for details were

plentiful in the clothes, from his delicate slip dresses to a killer patchwork leather jacket with black shearling sleeves.

Hansen, a '70s superstar model, is married to Keith Richards and took her turn on the catwalk with a smile on her face, dressed in an iridescent trouser suit of black and gold.

There was star power on Kors' front row as well: Kerry Washington, Catherine Zeta-Jones and her husband, Michael Douglas, along with "If Beale Street Could Talk" Oscar nominee Regina King.

After the show, Kors called Manilow's appearance the cherry on the cake.

"We met him exactly a year

ago. It's very bizarre, backstage at a concert. I like everyone else am a huge fan," Kors told The Associated Press. "I said to him, 'Have you ever gone to a fashion show?' And he said no. I said 'Watch a few of our shows on YouTube, maybe we can do something in the future.'"

The theme didn't come together until Kors found himself perusing his old yearbook and got to thinking about his start in New York in the late-70s, and "just this whole convergence of glamour."

At the time, the city was "pretty gritty and pretty dangerous," he recalled, "and music was a huge part of it, and dance. And Patti Hansen was all over my walls. I think the last fashion show she was in was in 1994."

Ultimately, Kors said, he wanted to put together an optimistic collection. Perhaps his crushed satin charmeuse blouse in cocoa would boost your mood and not bust your budget. □

Trombonists who died in 2018 honored with music in Cleveland

By JULIE CARR SMYTH
Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — The late American jazz great Urbie Green and three other accomplished trombonists who died in 2018 will be remembered Saturday at a musical event in Cleveland.

Living trombone stars Jiggs Whigham and John Marcellus will be featured at the Memorial Trombone Festival at Case Western Reserve University, a concert by some 20 trombonists gathered from around the city.

The half-day event begins with a warm-up led by Case trombone professor Paul Ferguson, who is the artistic director of the Cleveland Jazz Orchestra and the event's organizer. A rehearsal and a master class with Whigham and Marcellus will be followed by the culminating afternoon performance.

Whigham is the jazz orchestra's weekend guest, Ferguson said, and the festival started with the idea of paying tribute to Whigham's friend Allen Kofsky, a 39-year veteran of the Cleveland Orchestra who died in June at age 92. Kofsky had played under such renowned conductors as George Szell, Lorin Maazel and Christoph von Dohnanyi.

But sad news continued to greet the trombone world. Respected trombonist and band leader Bill Watrous, who had redefined trombone technique during a 50-year career that included performances with Quincy Jones, Prince and Frank Sinatra, died in July. Edwin Anderson, a bass trombonist with the Cleveland Orchestra from 1964 to 1985 and later an Indiana University professor, followed in October. Then, on Dec. 31, the legendary Ur-



In this July 5, 1960, file photo, Thailand's King Bhumibol Adulyadej, right, plays the saxophone during a jam session with legendary jazz clarinetist Benny Goodman, left, drummer Gene Krupa, second left, and trombonist Urbie Green in New York.

Associated Press

ban Clifford "Urbie" Green ended trombonists' year on its final sad note, dying at age 92.

"I can't think of any other year when we've lost so many, in what turned out to be a seven-month period,"

Ferguson said.

Ferguson said the versatility of the trombone shows in the breadth of the four trombonists' careers, which spanned classical, jazz and pop.

Revered by fellow musi-

cians for the warm, mellow tone he could maintain even into the instrument's highest registers, Green was perhaps the best known of the bunch. He played with most of the major jazz artists of the 1950s and 1960s, touring with Woody Herman and Gene Krupa. He played on more than 250 recordings and released more than two dozen solo albums. Ferguson, also principal trombonist and arranger for the Cleveland Pops, said the trombone choir that will assemble to honor Green, Kofsky, Watrous and Anderson will include students from Case and the Cleveland Institute of Music and members of the Cleveland Jazz Orchestra and the Cleveland Trombone Collective.

Whigham, a Cleveland native, is considered one of the premier jazz trombonists of the last half century, according to Ferguson. □

'Never Look Away' is an absorbing, exhausting ride

By JOCELYN NOVECK

Associated Press

What to say about an Oscar-nominated film that's more than three hours long, apparently despised by the man whose life inspired it, and has been called both a masterpiece and a manipulation? Perhaps that the film's fascinating backstory could make for another three-hour movie.

The protagonist would be German director Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck, who won the foreign language Oscar for Germany with his first feature, the hugely compelling "The Lives of Others," about the Stasi in East Germany. He moved to Hollywood and a few years later utterly dismayed fans with "The Tourist," starring Angelina Jolie and Johnny Depp.

Now, nearly a decade later, he's made "Never Look Away," a sumptuous, sweeping saga about nothing less than war and art, and the powers of the latter to heal the wounds of the former.

Enter Gerhard Richter, whose story the film not-so-



This image released by Sony Pictures Classics shows Sebastian Koch in a scene from "Never Look Away."

Associated Press

loosely tells. (The fictional main character is named Kurt Barnert.) Richter, 87, the noted German artist, initially cooperated with von Donnersmarck, spending many hours recounting his story, but has since angrily disavowed the film. There's no way for the pub-

lic to know who's "right." The only thing to do is judge the movie, nominated in the Oscar foreign language category, for itself: a highly ambitious, compulsively watchable and also exhausting and exasperating work, not merely for its length but because it has

the feel of more than one film.

We begin in 1937 with Kurt, a little boy, accompanying his beloved aunt Elisabeth (a moving Saskia Rosendahl) to the "Degenerate Art" exhibit, mounted by the Nazis to excoriate modern artworks as decadent

and morally corrupt. Elisabeth whispers to Kurt that she actually likes the stuff.

Elisabeth is beautiful enough to be chosen to hand a bouquet to Adolf Hitler as he rides through town. But we soon learn she suffers from schizophrenia. Her mother takes her to the doctor, a fatal mistake. As she's carted away against her will, she calls out to young Kurt: "Never look away!" Because all that is true, she has taught him, is beautiful. Elisabeth will soon cross paths with Carl Seeband (a superb Sebastian Koch), a leading gynecologist who will seal her fate. We meet him at a gathering where Nazi officials give the order to not merely sterilize mentally ill women, but release them from their "worthless lives." (It must be mentioned here that a gas chamber scene is disturbing and, frankly, feels unwisely explicit.) At war's end, Seeband is captured by the Russians, but survives by finding a way to get into the good graces of a commander, who protects his terrible secret. □

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 SUN 1:25 | 4:00 | 6:35 | 9:10 **[PG-13]**

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 SAT 1:55 | 4:25 | 6:55 | 9:25 | 11:55
 SUN 1:55 | 4:25 | 6:55 | 9:25 **[R]**

MISS BALA
 GINA RODRIGUEZ | ANTHONY MACKIE
 MON-SUN 4:00 | 9:15 **[PG-13]**

the upside
 BRYAN CRANSTON | KEVIN HART
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BON BINI HOLLAND 2
 JANDINO ASPORAAT | LILIANA DE VRIES
 DUTCH
 MON-THU 5:20 | 7:25 | 9:30
 FRI 5:20 | 7:25 | 9:30 | 11:35
 SAT 1:10 | 3:15 | 5:20 | 7:25 | 9:30 | 11:35
 SUN 1:10 | 3:15 | 5:20 | 7:25 | 9:30 **[PG-13]**

THE KING
 LOUIS ASHBORNE SERKIS | PATRICK STEWART
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Dismas Hardy returns in 'The Rule of Law'



This cover image released by Atria shows "The Rule of Law," by John Lescroart.

Associated Press

By JEFF AYERS

Associated Press

"The Rule of Law" (Atria), by John Lescroart

Dismas Hardy and his colleagues are forced into a case with personal ramifications in John Lescroart's latest novel, "The Rule of Law."

As time passes for the char-

acters, they have to deal with both the joys and sorrows of growing older. Yet the past is always lingering in the background waiting to cause chaos at the most inopportune moment.

Dismas Hardy sees his practice expanding. His friend has lost re-election to the district attorney position and another close ally has retired from the police department. Things start to get wonky when his trusted secretary disappears. It's completely out of character for her, and when she returns as if nothing has happened, Hardy wants answers. She says her brother has been released from prison and she's letting him crash at her place. Then the police arrive to arrest her.

A human trafficker has been killed, and the evidence leads to her brother. Since she wasn't seen

at the time of the murder, she's arrested as an accessory. Hardy knows she had nothing to do with this coyote's death, so he sets out to prove it, which puts him in a fight with the new district attorney, and he has a grudge against Hardy and his colleagues. Ron Jameson has already let the power of his new office go to his head, and if he has to bend the rules a bit to get what he wants, he will. Now Hardy is in the way.

Several strong themes resonate throughout this story including corruption, immigration, and the power of love and family. Hardy wants to follow the rule of law, and his foe in the district attorney's office will ignore it to succeed. Lescroart has crafted another wonderful legal thriller that will easily please his fans and those who aren't familiar with his body of work. □

'Boomerang' series updates story for millennial audiences

By LYNN ELBER
DAVID BAUDER
Associated Press

PASADENA, Calif. (AP) — A roundup of news from the Television Critics Association winter meeting, where TV networks and streaming services are presenting details on upcoming programs.

'BOOMERANG' IS BACK

Halle Berry and Lena Waithe say they've updated the 1992 movie "Boomerang" for a new generation. Berry said the original story that focused on black characters' lives and work was innovative for its time. But Berry said the issues that millennials face today are different and required a "fresher" approach for the BET comedy series premiering 10 p.m. EST Tuesday.

Waithe said she understands the affection people have for the film that, besides Berry, starred Eddie Murphy, Robin Givens, David Alan Grier, Martin Lawrence and Grace Jones. But Waithe said Monday that viewers who want fresh faces and a new take should watch the show. It's set about 25 years after the movie and follows its characters' offspring.

The series cast includes Tetona Jackson, Tequan Richmond and Leland Martin.

NO 'THRONES' CONFLICT FOR 'HANDMAID'S TALE'

Resistance is the theme when "The Handmaid's Tale" returns this summer with 13 episodes for its third season, but the Hulu drama is avoiding a collision with the final season of HBO's "Game of Thrones."

The dystopian drama will debut three new episodes on Wednesday, June 5, streaming service Hulu said. Other episodes will follow on subsequent Wednesdays.

The return date contrasts with the previous seasons' April debuts and puts the drama outside the eligibility window for this year's Emmy Awards. It also keeps "The Handmaid's Tale" out of the path of juggernaut "Game of Thrones," which starts April 14.



This image released by Hulu shows a scene from the series, "The Handmaid's Tale," returning for a third season on June 5.

Associated Press

The latter wasn't a consideration, Craig Erwich, Hulu's vice president for original series, told TV critics Monday.

"We simply wanted to give the show as much time as possible to maintain the quality it has," Erwich said. As for the Emmys, he said, TV academy voters will be able to consider the series as a whole when it competes.

The Hulu drama collected six Emmys for its first season, including best drama and best lead actress for Elisabeth Moss, who stars as June.

The new season of "The Handmaid's Tale" will focus on June's struggle against the repressive regime of Gilead, Hulu said in a release. Other characters will be forced to take a stand as well, with "blessed be the fight" the guiding prayer for rebels. Hulu also promised "startling reunions" and betrayals in the upcoming season.

CLOONEY'S 'CATCH'

George Clooney says he never expected his next project to be a miniseries based on a novel he read in high school.

But against his initial inclination, he's directing and starring in Hulu's series "Catch-22," drawn from Joseph Heller's classic work

about the insanity of war. The streaming service Hulu will release it this spring.

Clooney said Monday that the longer format allowed them to develop the characters beyond what could be done in Mike Nichols' 1970 classic movie. Adopted at the time by opponents of the Vietnam War, he said the story making fun of the red tape and bureaucracy of war is relevant today and not tied to a particular conflict.

Series makers say the mixture of horror and hilarity becomes more pronounced as the series goes on.

ASK THE DOCTOR

The question that legendary sex therapist Ruth Westheimer gets from young people today may surprise you.

It's about loneliness.

"It's hard not having someone to share their life with, their experiences with," she said. "It's not just about sex." The 90-year-old West-

heimer, who is still teaching and writing another edition of a "Sex for Dummies" book, said she's concerned about young people losing their ability to have conversations. She bans computers from the room when she teaches.

Westheimer is the subject of "Ask Dr. Ruth," a documentary about her life that will appear on the Hulu streaming service this spring.

BRYANT GOES 'SHRILL'

"Saturday Night Live" star Aidy Bryant says she was drawn to the Hulu series "Shrill" because of the chance to play a woman who is about more than her weight.

The six-part comedy debuting March 15 is based on Lindy West's memoir, "Shrill: Notes from a Loud Woman," which Bryant said struck a chord with her.

She identified with the book's portrayal of a world that is "telling you you're wrong for existing the way you do, even if you don't

feel that way," Bryant said Monday. "You feel like, 'I have a lot to offer the world and why do I have to do it in a size-two package?'"

But the series, which Bryant co-wrote, isn't what she called a "fat festival" that's obsessed with weight.

"Our show isn't really about being fat and it's also really not about dieting and it's really not about her body," she said of her character, Annie. Ultimately, she said, it's what any TV show is about: a character trying to achieve her goals and the family and friends who surround her.

Abortion also figures in the show, as it does in West's memoir.

Series executive producer Elizabeth Banks said she felt "having a positive, normalizing representation of women's reproductive rights on television would also be a really good idea."

HOWARD THE HULU DUCK

Hulu is teaming with Marvel to make four separate animated series based on comic book characters like Howard the Duck.

Director Kevin Smith and comics Chelsea Handler and Patton Oswalt are among the people who have signed deals with the streaming service to help produce the cartoons. Smith will work on the Howard the Duck series.

Other shows revolve around M.O.D.O.K., a villain with an enormous head; Hit-Monkey, about a Japanese snow monkey turned assassin; and Tigra and Dazzler, two superheroes who work in Los Angeles.

Hulu senior vice president Craig Erwich said Monday that animation is a particular favorite for its users. Since the deal was just signed, there's no estimate on when the series will be ready. □



In heart of Baghdad, IS war museum honors fallen militiamen

By ZEINA KARAM
QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA
Associated Press

BAGHDAD (AP) — A few steps from Baghdad's cultural heart and its famous book market on al-Mutanabi Street lies the Iraqi capital's latest tourist attraction: a war museum glorifying the sacrifices of thousands of mainly Shiite militiamen who died fighting the Islamic State group. The museum is meant to honor the fallen but it also underscores the Iran-backed militias' growing clout in the country. Their political and military might soared after they helped the government defeat IS — so much so that they are now accused by some of seeking to build a parallel state within Iraq.

Housed inside Baghdad's historic, Ottoman-era al-Qishla building, the museum displays rocket launchers, drones and cannons from the four-year fight with IS. Visitors can browse through the war booty and other memorabilia from the front lines, as well as personal belongings fighters left behind on battlefields across the country.

"I feel the spirits of the martyrs floating around this space. I feel that Iraq exists because of them. ... They are the pulse of Iraq," said 55-year-old teacher Umm Hassanin al-Oukeily on a visit to the museum this week.

The mainly Shiite militias — known collectively as the Popular Mobilization Forces, or "Hashed al-Shaabi"



In this Friday, Feb. 1, 2019 photo, commemorative images of militiamen who died fighting the Islamic State group over the past four years and weapons are on display in the Popular Mobilization Forces War Museum on al-Mutanabi Street, Baghdad, Iraq.

Associated Press

in Arabic — emerged following a call in June 2014 by Iraq's top Shiite cleric, Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, for volunteers to fight against IS.

At the time, Islamic State militants had overrun the northern city of Mosul, Iraq's second-largest, and much of northern and western Iraq, coming dangerously close to Baghdad and Shiite shrines farther south as Iraq's military and security forces collapsed in the face of the onslaught.

Tens of thousands heeded the cleric's call, enlisting in multiple militia factions, many of which had existed for years and even fought American forces in Iraq. Sanctioned by the Iraqi government, the militias

played a key role in the war against IS.

That made the Iran-backed militiamen an indirect ally to the American forces, who returned to Iraq in 2014 at the invitation of the government to help battle IS. A U.S.-led coalition provided crucial air support as Iraqi forces regrouped and drove IS out in a costly campaign.

The militias lost about 7,000 fighters in the war. They included some Christian, Yazidi, and Sunni militias but were dominated by Shiite groups with close ties to Iran. They came out of the war with the image of an almost holy force protecting Iraq's Shiite Muslim majority.

That kind of popular aura has helped enshrine the militias as a major political and paramilitary player in post-IS Iraq. Militia factions are present in almost every Iraqi province, in many cases deeply embedded in local governance and rivaling state institutions. Posters of dead fighters adorn shop windows in Baghdad and elsewhere.

"There are no words to describe my feelings right now," said al-Oukeily, the teacher, tears in her eyes as she made her way around the museum with her daughter.

Outside, in the al-Qishla

garden, families were gathered to enjoy the sun as music played in the background. Inside the building, somber military music accompanied the exhibits.

In 2018 parliamentary elections — the first after the victory over IS — the militias' coalition won 48 seats, making it the second-largest bloc in Parliament and guaranteeing the militias a say in formal politics. Under the new budget, militiamen are for the first time being paid the same salaries as soldiers.

The mix of arms and political power is a dangerous dynamic for Iraq, a country with a history of bloody sectarian strife. Iraq's Sunni minority and also some in the

military and the government fear the Shiite militias will dominate Iraq the way the powerful Revolutionary Guard does in Iran or the militant Hezbollah group in Lebanon.

The Shiite militias "are building economic empires, taking control of state reconstruction companies and projects, and developing into economic organizations," said a Western diplomat in Baghdad who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss Iraqi politics.

The more than 50 militias in Iraq have up to 140,000 fighters, according to some estimates and the Popular Mobilization Forces itself. They are backed by tanks and weapons, and have their own intelligence agency, operations rooms and court of law.

In an interview with The Associated Press last month, the leader of one of the most powerful of the militias, Qais al-Khazali, said their existence complements that of the Iraqi military and suggested that disbanding them was not in the cards as long as there's an ongoing military threat to Iraq. At the museum, images of the fallen militiamen hang down from the ceiling, printed on light bulbs. Boots, watches and eyeglasses are displayed next to flowers that honor the martyrs.

Visitors walk around life-size replicas of militia outposts, complete with real sniper rifles, sandbags and camouflage nets from the field. □



In this Friday, Feb. 1, 2019 photo, body armor shredded by shrapnel that was worn by a militiamen who died fighting the Islamic State group, is on display in the Popular Mobilization Forces War Museum on al-Mutanabi Street, Baghdad, Iraq.

Associated Press



In this Friday, Feb. 1, 2019 photo, statues and other commemorative works depicting the fight with the Islamic State group, are on display in the Popular Mobilization Forces War Museum on al-Mutanabi Street, Baghdad, Iraq.

Associated Press